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METZ, SUSAN ALENE. A Production Analysis of Charlotte Chorpenning's Rumpelstiltskin. (1978) Directed by: Mr. Thomas Behm. Pp. 114

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the script, produce the play, and evaluate the production of Rumpelstiltskin by Charlotte Chorpenning, adapted for the Theatre for Young People Professional Repertory Touring Company for the tour of 1975. The play was produced in the Raymond W. Taylor Theatre at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, January 26 through February 2, 1975. The tour extended throughout many North Carolina public schools from February 4 to April 2, 1975.

Chapter I of this thesis tells of the selection and cutting process as the director dealt with Charlotte Chorpenning's original script of Rumpelstiltskin. The Chapter also shows the director's philosophy of child drama as shown in the design concepts and character analysis.

Chapter II is a manuscript of Rumpelstiltskin as the script was produced including the director's notes, blocking, and photographs.

Chapter III consists of the director's analysis of the production. Included in the Appendix are newspaper reviews, as well as a copy of the program, and a teacher's study guide as presented to the tour schools.

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A PRODUCTION ANALYSIS OF  
CHARLOTTE CHORPENNING'S  
RUMPELSTILTSKIN

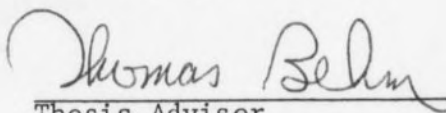
by

Susan Alene Metz

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Approved by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following  
committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser

Thomas Behm

Committee Members

Robert J. Fink

Herman W. Williams

April 25, 1978  
Date of Acceptance by Committee



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

As the genre of children's theatre literature develops in many directions, the backbone still remains the old folk story--the fairy tale world brought to life on stage. The direction of such a play must meet all the standards the child's imagination provides, and attempt to satisfy his many expectations. There is a great challenge in making tangible the fantasy realm for children. Many of the familiar fairy tales are highly dramatic in content, containing magic, strange creatures and happenings, and royalty to be admired. Their very nature is purely theatrical.

Rumpelstiltskin is such a play. There are innumerable chances to entertain and gladden a child through the script and hopefully this production will do so. The story is exciting, the characters interesting, and all the visual elements can combine to make an experience for the child to remember for a lifetime.

#### Selecting the Play

Directing a play for touring is an exciting undertaking and directing for children a real challenge. The script must be especially good to meet all of the requirements of children's theater "on the road."

First to be considered when choosing a script is that it must be an integral part of the UNC-G's Theatre for Young People's 1974-75 season. It also must be one of three plays designed to appeal to young audiences here in Greensboro, with a title that will attract children and their parents to the theatre. It also must be complimentary to the other two plays chosen for the season, to provide varied and balanced entertainment for our audience. It was necessary for the three directors to meet to decide on the best possible season.

Another requirement is that the script must be suitable for the touring company. Any script chosen must have a small cast, predominantly male, and a set simple in construction and design. To tour, the play also must be of a convenient length for easy performance within most school schedules, approximately one hour or less.

Third, it must be a well written children's play of good quality. Many adaptations of this story are loosely constructed or "campy," using modern slang or popular phrases from television or advertising to get a laugh, often detracting from the real plot or from the understanding or literary value of the script. In selecting a script attention must be paid to the amount of time and effort the director and cast are able to spend on the play in order to produce it in the most satisfactory manner

possible, and to the education and entertainment value for the children.

In a survey done in Oklahoma City among children in all types of schools in grades K-8, the researchers reached the following conclusions:

As evidenced by 475 school-children of the Oklahoma City area, the ideal play would be a funny story that they have never heard before, with lots of chases and running around but no singing, lots of action rather than talk, probably with a happy ending.<sup>1</sup>

Although this oversimplifies the pollster's findings, a great deal of information about children's tastes in drama can be gleaned from this silly sentence. If Oklahoma City can be used as a sampling these are very important prerequisites for any child that sees a play. He wants to laugh at new stories and watch lots of action on the stage. He should be satisfied. Children expect to be entertained in the best way possible and ought to be. The real skeleton of this experience is the script. Even the best performers and directors are handicapped by a sluggish script, one that is too long, stagnant, or without sufficient visual interest. Attempting to find a lively, entertaining retelling of an old fairy tale, the type of play decided upon as most suitable, the story of Rumpelstiltskin was chosen.

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<sup>1</sup>Claire Jones, "What Do Children Want in Children's Theatre?," Children's Theatre Review, November, 1973.

The difficulty arose searching for a workable script. There are several retellings of the old Grimm fairy tale, but none of them seemed suitable. For example, Half Past Wednesday, an almost completely musical version produced by Hal Raywin and Jerome Rudolph, with music and lyrics by Robert Colby and Nita Jones, book by Ann Marie Barlow, is interesting but not what the actors or director of the Theatre for Young People tour company needed to display their talents. The plot is all told in songs with many verses and the magic of the script is not apparent.

Another new version, Rumpelstiltskin by Vern Adix, is not musical but incorporates many unfamiliar elements into the Grimm brothers' plot, often going far afield for humor and incorporating dialect into the role of the Miller's Daughter.

The script that came the closest to meeting the needs of the company was the 1944 version of Rumplestiltskin by Charlotte Chorpenning. There were, however, several problems with this script too. For touring purposes it was too long and had far too many characters. The play was to be no more than an hour long and was to have only seven characters. This script was too cumbersome in its original form, being over two hours long and containing thirteen named characters. The solution was apparent; cutting and adapting the Chorpenning script to the requirements of the Theatre for Young People's touring company.

The cutting was done quite simply by omitting the two guards, Gothol and Ingert, Karen, the Nurse, two Ladies-in-Waiting, and the Pages. This left us with seven main characters: Rumpelstiltskin, Mother Hulda, the Miller's Daughter, the Miller's Wife, the Miller, the King and the King's Son.

The biggest problem with changing the play this way was that in omitting Gothol and Ingert I had eliminated Rumpelstiltskin's discovery. It seemed probable that the Miller and his Wife might go on the search for Rumpelstiltskin, however, so I simply replaced Gothol with the Miller, and Ingert with the Miller's Wife in that important scene. The other omissions were minor and became inconspicuous in the cutting.

The cutting strengthened the play by discarding unnecessary characters and adding depth to the major ones. Giving the Miller's Wife and the Miller more lines and more participation in the plot made it possible for them to develop a more well-rounded characterization through additions of motivated business. It also tightened the action by shortening some tedious scenes. As rehearsals begin, more cutting may be undertaken for clarity and brevity.

#### The Playwright

In discussing Charlotte Chorpenning (b. 1876 - d. 1955) one begins to describe a whole era in the



development of children's theatre. She, more than anyone, has added to the literature of child drama, concentrating her efforts on popular old tales such as Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood and other childhood classics. Miss Chorpenning tested all of her plays thoroughly at the Goodman Memorial Theatre in Chicago where she was director and often playwright over the span of twenty-one years.<sup>2</sup>

In 1931 Charlotte Barrows Chorpenning assumed the directorship of the children's theatre and began the intensive period of playwrighting, production and experimentation for which both she and the Goodman will always be remembered. Both alone and through collaboration, this prolific playwright more than doubled the repertoire of good scripts for children's theatre in her lifetime.<sup>3</sup>

Charlotte Chorpenning's playwrighting is based almost totally on her experiences with her audiences. She would rewrite and restage her plays many times to increase their effectiveness and to please the children more. She watched her audiences very carefully, collecting small clues toward greater understanding of the children she tried so hard to please. Her book<sup>4</sup> notes many specific incidents where observations of the children's reactions to the play resulted in script or production changes. Through this process she discovered her simple formula:

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<sup>2</sup>Charlotte B. Chorpenning, Twenty-One Years With Children's Theatre (Anchorage, Kentucky: Children's Theatre Press, 1954.)

<sup>3</sup>Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Larson Watkins, Children's Theatre (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>Chorpenning, Twenty-One Years, p. 33.



. . . a good play for children as well as most plays for adults has three organic elements:

1. A story with a beginning, middle and end, or to use another wording, a problem, a complication and solution.
2. A character whose play it is.
3. Meaning.

One of these three must control the structure of the play.<sup>5</sup>

Her attitude and loving concern for her audience at the Goodman Theatre made her work great and highly respected. Productions of her works should be done as faithfully as possible to her original artistic intent and spirit, sincerely concerned with the child audience. The flaws in her scripts as we see them today may be the result of her observation of children of the 1930's and 40's rather than the modern audience. She has a timeless respect for youth which continues to be very important to even the most modern producer of child drama. She encouraged her audiences to use their imaginations, showing them how to grow and develop creativity. Taking her lead, we will attempt to create a production that will give each child in our audience an exciting experience to be remembered in his imagination for long after the curtain falls.

#### The Style of the Play

In producing Rumpelstiltskin this director will try to include four elements that contribute to the style: sincerity, use of humor, suspense, and the "larger than

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

life" concept. Each of these elements will contribute to the director's approach in dealing with the actors and supervising the designs.

Consistent with the author's intent, UNC-G's Rumpelstiltskin will be produced as sincerely as possible. Each actor will be encouraged to be honest and straightforward in his interpretation of the role. This will add to the believability of the action and tell the story in true "fairy tale" fashion. As is the style of most children's plays, Rumpelstiltskin will be done presentationally.

Fairy tales are very important. They are exciting and create a fantasy world of magic and real people mixed up to delight any small child. The colorful retelling of any of these wonderful old stories provides excellent theatre.

Lines of battle are clearly drawn in the fairy tale; good overcomes evil despite the odds of supernatural powers. The child recognizes the justice of the ultimate punishment and approves the reward of a rise in social status. Since the classic fairy tales are produced more frequently than other plays, many children are likely to get their first theatre experience at a performance of one of them.<sup>6</sup>

The second important element of this production will be the use of humor and burlesque to keep it interesting for the children. By making the Miller and his Wife comic characters in appearance, gesture, and dialogue, we will add another dimension to our story, the dimension of fun.

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<sup>6</sup>Davis and Watkins, p. 28.

The third element that must be emphasized to make Rumpelstiltskin a success is the use of movement and spectacle to create suspense. The scenes at the Edge of the World must be frightening and ominous. Rumpelstiltskin himself must be the personification of evil as a child might perceive it. He must speak and move intensely and frighten the audience to some degree or else the threat of his stealing the baby will be meaningless. Music and sound effects will enhance this effect.

Suspense is very important to the telling of a folk tale. It must build to keep the audience interested and excited. There are a number of moments in the script in which the daughter encounters threats, either from the King or Rumpelstiltskin. These must be truly suspenseful or the audience will not react to the girl's triumph over them in the end. We must understand that she is in danger before we can rejoice at her deliverance. From the very beginning there must be questions to be answered and problems to be resolved to maintain the desired high level of emotional response.

The final consideration concerning style in the "larger than life" concept. Children appreciate the recreation of their dreams and fantasies on stage in a visual form to which they can relate and find exciting. To make the child audience completely satisfied with their attendance at the theatre the director must have the

actors create large characters with sweeping gestures and oversimplified movement. He must also see that the plot depends on clear explication and rapid development, place sets and lights that will create an illusion to satisfy the most imaginative child and incorporate music and sound to complete the experience. "Only the very best is good enough for children."<sup>7</sup>

### The Play

The script of Rumpelstiltskin faithfully tells the story of a lovely young girl who wanders into the King's garden one day. Her proud parents, the town Miller and his Wife, tell the King that she is so talented she can spin straw into gold. The hard, cold reality of the situation occurs to them, however, when they are carrying straw to the Queen's spinning room where the greedy King has ordered three roomsful of straw to be spun into gold for him. He orders the girl to spin or die. If she succeeds, she is to marry the King's Son and become Queen.

Alone, she weeps at her predicament. Rumpelstiltskin, who has been watching from the Edge of the World looking for a King's baby to put into his pot that would give him the power to rule all men, hears her cries. He offers to spin straw into gold if she will bargain with him for her first born son. She stalls him twice and he spins for

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. viii.

only a token, but the third time, she desperately consents to the hideous trade.

A year later she is the Queen watching her newborn baby. Rumpelstiltskin arrives and insists that she give him the baby. She again bargains with him and he consents to let her keep her baby if she can guess his name. She has only nine guesses and quickly uses three. She sends the Miller and his Wife to find out the strange little man's name. They do discover Rumpelstiltskin but don't hear his name. The young Queen goes to see him for herself, leaving her baby behind.

Rumpelstiltskin grabs the baby but the Queen returns in time to guess the name she heard him singing. He flies into a rage and the curtain closes on the Queen happily clutching her child.

#### The Characters

All the roles are unique. In casting, an effort was made to find very different physical types to emphasize the variety of characters.

Mother Hulda is an earth-mother figure. She is benevolent, trying to contain Rumpelstiltskin's impetuous evil deeds. Rumpelstiltskin is evil-looking and evil-acting. His speech and gestures indicate his malevolent intent. He is a supernatural creature with magic powers, neither a man nor an animal. Mother Hulda is his antithesis of the spirit world. She is kind, all-seeing and very wise.

Her part in the play is primarily that of exposition, to help Rumpelstiltskin tell of his terrible plan. The contrast between these two characters needs to be evident.

The Miller and his Wife are rustics. They are rather rough-hewn with hearts of gold but sometimes bringing disaster upon themselves by not thinking before they act. They are humorous characters, relating in a very earthy fashion to the others in the play. The Miller is a bit reticent, his Wife a bit pushy.

The Miller's Daughter is a sweet ingenue with whom all the little girls in the audience can easily identify. She views life simply and speaks with genuine candor. She is likeable and naive but sincere in her wish to make the kingdom a better place when she becomes Queen.

The King is a selfish man who loves gold. The birth of his grandson, however, softens his heart toward the end of the play and he and the Miller become rivals for the baby's affection in a comic way.

The King's Son is young and spirited, facing his father's anger when he threatens the Miller's Daughter. The boys in the audience will probably identify closely with him. He sincerely loves and believes in the young Queen.

The characters are not stereotypes but three-dimensional. Moses Goldberg makes the statement that:

The characters in a play for children must be as motivated, as three-dimensional, as real as in any



other kind of play . . . They cannot simply be, and thereby represent a quality. He has to have a specific voice, a walk, and a physical carriage . . . The penalty for failing to achieve a believable human character is quite severe. Not having the patience of their elders or the manners to ignore their own boredom, children will destroy any performance that does not please them. If any detail of characterization strikes them as phony they will literally "turn off" that actor . . . It is absolutely essential that the actor be able to convince the audience that he believes the truth of what he is doing.

The characters in a play for children must, then, be approached with honesty and respect, must not be oversimplified or condescending, and must be played at every performance with consistency and concentration.<sup>8</sup>

### The Design Concepts

The set design was conceived with basic ideas of effect and illusion. A palace was needed but we couldn't be too specific with details. The flats needed to serve as both interior and exterior walls, to simplify the set for touring and to use as little time for scene changes as possible. Colorful stones and a simulated tower created a nice feeling of the story-book world of Rumpelstiltskin.

The Edge of the World must be visible during parts of Acts I and III and seem quite mysterious. A dimly lit false proscenium and platform in the upstage center served this purpose well, fading in and out as needed. The platform was slightly raised in order to give the illusion that Rumpelstiltskin and Mother Hulda were looking over the rest of the world from above. Also, a pot was needed, as it is

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<sup>8</sup>Moses Goldberg, Children's Theatre, A Philosophy and A Method (Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 140.

referred to several times and is where Rumpelstiltskin intends to put the King's baby. A small garden area was needed, and a spinning room with three doors leading to rooms filled with straw. In all, three sets were needed in order to sustain the passage of time and the actions.

The playing area was quite adequate for seven actors, although the set needed to be small enough to adapt to touring conditions. It was necessary to design the set for a thirty-foot proscenium, the size frequently found on tour, so producing the play here in Taylor Theatre will entail using less than the whole stage.

The primary considerations were those of color and style. The scenery must support our concept of a truthful retelling of the story and provide numerous pleasurable visual effects.

The costumes should compliment the set both in color and design, shades of purple, green and gold being predominant. They should be in the traditional Early Gothic period used for most old tales.

Rumpelstiltskin and Mother Hulda must be designed to emphasize their supernatural qualities, using masks to separate them from the other characters and increasing their aesthetic distance from the audience. Rumpelstiltskin's costume should give him a unique, startling appearance, almost satanic.



The other costumes should emphasize the distinctive qualities of each character, readily showing the children the character's status, age and an overall impression as each one enters the stage. The Daughter is a simple country girl and her costume needs to indicate this. She should appear to be a peasant at first with a colorful skirt and plain blouse. At the King's request she is given clothes befitting a queen. She needs a regal gown that will indicate her rapid change in status. In the final scenes she is the Queen and has to be costumed more sedately.

The Miller and his Wife are country people as well, wearing the common browns and white of European peasant dress. The Miller's Wife needs an apron and heavy shoes as well as a line of dress that emphasizes her full figure. The Miller should wear soft shoes and an apron of the type a man in his profession would wear to protect his clothes from the flour. Both should appear somewhat disheveled.

The King and his Son should have the royal purples and be dressed in finery trimmed with fur and gold. The King should have a cape or long robe to cover his gown, as well as a large bejeweled crown. The Son also needs a crown, smaller than his father's, and a short tunic, worn with tights. In order to support the "larger than life" concept, many of the costume details, particularly on the royalty, ought to be somewhat outsized.

The lights should be designed to allow the children to use their imaginations in the best way possible. The majority of the actions needs only general illumination with selective visibility used to light the Edge of the World and golden lights to shine from behind the doors to the rooms of gold. The interior and the exterior of the castle should be lit differently, although this is a subtle effect on the audience. Again the touring limitations must be considered, as instruments and power will be limited. The only other special lighting effect should be some type of flickering effect on a dimmed stage when Rumpelstiltskin spins the straw into gold. The spinning wheel should be highlighted by a special.

#### The Direction

There are two primary areas of concern in directing this play: first, it will be for children and, second, it will be designed as a touring production.

There are a number of statements that could apply to the direction of a children's play. I prefer, however, to rely on Charlotte Chorpenning's advice. She states clearly some of the important information she learned on observing her child audience: "The story must never stop. Don't tell it, show it."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Chorpenning, p. 13.

To prevent the "stopping" of the story and action she gives a number of suggestions, strongly suggesting that the worst offender is "too much talk."<sup>10</sup> This makes one aware of the value of action in a play for children. There must be constant interesting activity on stage that commands attention and keeps the children involved. Although this movement must be constant it must also be motivated, no superfluous. Actors bounding about the stage just for the sake of action is a mistake. There must be an artistic, thoughtful balance in the amount of movement.

The child relies so heavily on the visual elements that he simply refuses to believe anything he does not see. The weakest possible scene in any children's play is a messenger reporting an important action . . . .

It is the director's responsibility to insure that everything which needs to be understood by the audience is clear visually and likewise that the visual expression of the play is nowhere in conflict with either the text or the conventions of the theatre. What is needed, in effect, is a visual language.<sup>11</sup>

Other important considerations are the use of music<sup>12</sup> to create a mood and the use of exercise spots to allow the audience to wiggle and release some tension and energy.<sup>13</sup> The music is critical to establishing the mood at the opening of the curtain, as the Edge of the World needs to

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>Goldberg, pp. 140-141.

<sup>12</sup>Chorpenning, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

be filled with mystery and suspense. Suitable music and sound effects should be played at that time and during the two scene changes to create and sustain the suspense.

Exercise spots should be provided throughout the play for the children to reasonably let off energy in a controlled manner. The scene changes will allow for this without causing a disturbance during the action, as well as several scenes where there is time for noisy response to what is happening on stage, for example, the argument between the King and his Son, or Rumpelstiltskin's bargaining for the baby. In addition, there will be times when the actors will ask for a response from the children.

Some scenes will be more troublesome than others to effectively sustain the suspense and momentum of the play. The inventive and exciting blocking of the scenes between Rumpelstiltskin and the Miller's Daughter will be the director's most difficult problem. These scenes are all necessary to the plot for exposition and to the characters for development and to the mood of the play for suspense. They must be blocked in such a way as to visually state the threat Rumpelstiltskin poses and must contain plenty of movement to keep the eyes of the children intent on the situation. The dialogue is repetitious and presents a challenge to dramatize effectively.

There are, moreover, other technical problems that need to be thoughtfully considered. We need to have a

spinning wheel that spins by itself, Rumpelstiltskin's pot needs to boil with different colors, and Rumpelstiltskin is to "fly to pieces" at the end of the play. The spinning wheel can be motorized and operated from backstage. The colors in the pot will have to be produced either with lights or chemicals, depending on the desired effect and the rest of the scenery. It also has to be a medium that can be adapted to the tour, that is there can be nothing perishable or highly combustible. In reference to Rumpelstiltskin's flying to pieces, the best way to accomplish this perhaps, is to make a few "pieces" that resemble Rumpelstiltskin, recreating part of his costume and stuffing it to look like an arm or a leg. As he disappears over the Edge of the World he or someone backstage can throw these pieces up to the top of the scenery.

As for touring, the main concern of the director should be that of alerting the actors to possible problems in different playing areas and anticipating these in the blocking. Many old auditoriums have acoustical difficulties to be overcome as well and frequently a lack of wing space must be considered. The technical director will have to provide for some of these differences and see that the scenery and lighting can be made functional under many varied conditions. The director, actors, and crew must all be extremely adaptable. Working with the experienced actors of the touring company will make my job in this respect much easier.

In anticipating the production of Rumpelstiltskin this director is faced with a combination of feelings. There is the excitement of creating something new and original, the challenge of cutting the script effectively and working with experienced actors and relatively inexperienced designers and the dual problem of mounting a play for the Tylor Theatre and for touring. The company and director need to work together very closely to achieve the best possible results. The creation of an ensemble and a bond of respect are indispensable to any theatrical production, more so in a situation where the actors will be together for several weeks, frequently performing under less than ideal circumstances. The establishment of pleasant working relationships is one of the director's foremost concerns. The script, the company, and the production staff all have the potential to create exciting children's theatre. It is this director's challenge to bring it all together.



CHAPTER II  
PROMPT BOOK

Act 1

(SCENE: ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD. AT THE BACK FOR SOME WIDTH--ENOUGH FOR RUMPEL'S DANCING--IS A LEVEL CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN THE FORESTAGE. RUMPEL IN LOW LIGHT, FROM POT, FROZEN UNTIL MUSIC ENDS.) [SEE FIGURE 1.]

RUMPEL

(CROUCHED OVER POT, BACK TO AUDIENCE.)

Today I Brew, tomorrow I bake.  
I stamp my foot, and the world doth shake.  
And no one knows from whence I came,  
Or that Rumpelstiltskin is my name.  
Oh, show me east, and show me west

(MOTHER HULDA ENTERS FROM BEHIND RUMPEL.)

Till I find the child that suits me best.  
Show me north and show me south-- (TAP ON SHOULDER, WITH  
NEXT LINE)

(DURING THIS, A WOMAN'S TALL FIGURE COMES UP OVER THE EDGE OF THE WORLD; SHE WATCHES HIM. HER EYES TWINKLE, AND SHE LAUGHS SILENTLY, BUT AT THIS POINT, SHE SHAKES HER HEAD, AND TAPS HIM ON THE SHOULDER SHARPLY. HE STOPS CHANTING, AND BACKS AWAY FROM HER. HE IS AFRAID OF HER.)

MOTHER HULDA

Rumpelstiltskin--

RUMPEL

Eh-h? (BACKS AWAY.)

MOTHER HULDA

What are you doing?

RUMPEL

(TO POT.) I am boiling my pot and . . . (TO AUDIENCE.) I am looking for something to put in my pot.



Figure 1



MOTHER HULDA

What? . . . (RUMPEL RUNS TO STAGE LEFT OF POT--SITS.)  
Stand still. (RUMPEL HIDES HEAD.) Look at me. (RUMPEL  
PEEK UP.) Straight into my eyes. What do you want to put  
in your pot?

RUMPEL

A baby. A King's baby. (HIDES HEAD AGAIN.)

MOTHER HULDA

A King's baby!

RUMPEL

Then, you see (GETS UP.) when I boil my pot, I can rule the  
thoughts of men.

MOTHER HULDA

(BACKING AWAY.) Why do you want to do that?

RUMPEL

(FROM BEHIND POT.) I want to make an end of them. (TO  
AUDIENCE.) I want the whole world to myself.

MOTHER HULDA

Haven't I given you every power you asked for?

RUMPEL

Yes.

MOTHER HULDS

Why don't you use them?

RUMPEL

But if I can rule their thoughts, if I can fill them as full  
of greed (BIG GESTURE TO AUDIENCE.) as a night is full of  
dark when there are no stars, all men will make an end of  
each other.

MOTHER HULDA

For once you've found out something important.

RUMPEL

A King's child. A little King's son! (HE RUNS TO THE POT AND FLINGS SOMETHING INTO IT.) Today I brew--

MOTHER HULDA

Now, now! (MOVES TO POT, REPRIMANDING RUMPEL.)

RUMPEL

(CONTINUING.) . . . Tomorrow I bake-- (MOVES AROUND POT LEFT)

MOTHER HULDA

I didn't say you could. (FOLLOWING RIGHT.)

RUMPEL

(CONTINUING.) Show me a King's son I can take--(TURNS HIS BACK TO AUDIENCE.)

MOTHER HULDA

(FOLLOWING HIM.) Stop it!

RUMPEL

For nobody knows from whence I came--(MOTHER HULDA GOES TO HIM, THREATENINGLY.)

MOTHER HULDA

(IN FRONT OF POT.) Rumpelstiltskin! You bad thing! I didn't say you could put a King's son in your pot.

RUMPEL

I wasn't. I was only making it show me palaces and King's gardens, where a queen might be walking with her baby.

MOTHER HULDA

However would you get the baby if the pot did show one?

RUMPEL

That's easy. (BACKING AROUND POT.) I have only to go three times around my pot backward, and my little door (GESTURES TOWARD DOOR.) will open onto any place in the world I tell it to. When it is dark, and the world is asleep, I can go through my door and steal the baby away.

MOTHER HULDA

(FOLLOWS RIGHT TO LEFT OF POT.) Nothing of the sort! If you want your pot to make men greedy, you must bargain for the baby.

RUMPEL

Bargain? Queens don't bargain their babies away.

MOTHER HULDA

You must get a queen to give you her child in exchange for gold.

RUMPEL

No mother in the world would do that.

MOTHER HULDA

(MOVING TO GO.) Then you can never make men quite greedy enough to make an end of each other.

RUMPEL

(TO AUDIENCE.) There might be one. (MOVING IN FRONT OF POT.) Or maybe I can trick one into it. I'll keep looking. (TO MOTHER HULDA.) May I keep looking?

MOTHER HULDA

Oh, yes. You may look. (GOES TO POT TO LOOK, TOO.)  
(RUMPEL SKIPS BACK TO POT AND FLINGS SOMETHING IN.)

RUMPEL

Boil green, and show me a garden fair,  
Where a queen walks soft in fragrant air--  
(AS LIGHTS COME UP, DAUGHTER SLIPS ONSTAGE THROUGH GATE  
RIGHT. THE LIGHTS ARE GREEN AT FIRST, THEN SUNNY DAYLIGHT,  
COME UP ON THE GARDEN BELOW. THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER IS  
DISCOVERED. SHE HAS JUST SLIPPED THROUGH THE GATE AND  
STANDS DRINKING THE FRAGRANT AIR. SHE IS IN BRILLIANT  
PEASANT HOLIDAY DRESS.)  
That's not a queen. [SEE FIGURE 2.]

MOTHER HULDA

(LOOKING INTO POT.) Sh-h-h! The pot knows.



Figure 2

DAUGHTER

(NOW AT CENTER STAGE.) How sweet the air is in a King's garden. But the sun has no more gold than at my father's mill.

RUMPEL

(TO MOTHER HULDA.) It's just a miller's daughter.

MOTHER HULDA

Wait a while. (BOTH FREEZE OVER POT AS LIGHTS DIM. RUMPEL SETTLES DOWN TO LISTEN. THE MILLER'S WIFE PEEKS THROUGH GATE RIGHT AS DAUGHTER SPEAKS. THE WIFE THRUSTS HER HEAD FURTHER IN.)

WIFE

What are you doing, Daughter? (ONE STEP IN.)

DAUGHTER

I just tried to see through the gate, and it came open, so I came in.

MILLER

(FOLLOWING HIS WIFE IN. BUMPS INTO WIFE--LOOKING OFF STAGE RIGHT.) You will get us all killed.

DAUGHTER

I can't help going in when a gate opens. Something seems to call to me--"Find out!" . . . It's wonderful here.

WIFE

No one is allowed to enter the King's garden unless someone opens the gate.

DAUGHTER

But there wasn't anyone here.

WIFE

You'd better knock now.

(MILLER BEGINS TO EXIT RIGHT.)

WIFE

(GRABS SHIRTTAIL OF MILLER.) Knock here at the palace.

MILLER

(KNOCKS TIMIDLY AT PALACE.) Do you hear anybody? (WIFE AND MILLER HAVE EARS TO DOOR.)

WIFE

Not yet.

(NOISE FROM INSIDE THE PALACE. SON'S VOICE.)

MILLER AND WIFE

(GOING OUT THE GATE, TO DAUGHTER.) Come out! Come back!  
(GRABS AT EACH OTHERS WAIST. CROSS OFF RIGHT.)

DAUGHTER

(STAYING CENTER.) It's silly to pretend I'm out when I'm in.

WIFE

(ENTERING TO PULL AT HER.) What will happen to us?

DAUGHTER

Don't cry. (THE MILLER COMES IN A STEP, TOO, TO HUSTLE THEM BOTH OUT. THE GATE IS CLOSED TIGHTLY FROM OUTSIDE. KING'S SON ENTERS LEFT AND CROSSES TO CENTER.)

SON

Who are you who come knocking so loudly on the gate of the King's garden? (MILLER AND WIFE DROP TO KNEES.)

MILLER

(MOVING FORWARD ON KNEES) I am the Miller who grinds the King's grain. I have brought a gift of fine new flour to the King. You can't find flour like it anywhere. (PATS BAG OF FLOUR.)

WIFE

(FORWARD ON KNEES WITH PIES, ONE IN EACH HAND.) And I am the Miller's wife. I have brought a gift of fine pies made from our flour. You will never taste such pies in the world.

SON

And who is this pretty maid? (IGNORES BOTH--CROSSES TO DAUGHTER.)

DAUGHTER

I am the Miller's daughter. (DEEP CURTSY--TO KNEES.)

SON

What have you brought?

DAUGHTER

Nothing. I have nothing good enough.

WIFE

I bade you bring a spindle of your fine spinning. (CROSSES DOWNSTAGE TO DAUGHTER.)

DAUGHTER

It is not perfect enough for a King.

WIFE

It is better than the work of any maiden in this valley.

MILLER

There is no one who can spin as our daughter can. (CROSSES DOWNSTAGE RIGHT BETWEEN SON AND WIFE.)

DAUGHTER

(ASHAMED.) I'n not really clever, sir. My parents only think I am.

SON

But can you spin at all? (OFFERS HIS HANDS.)

DAUGHTER

(SHE STANDS WITH HIS HELP.) Of course, sir. All the girls are taught to do that. (CROSSES RIGHT TO AUDIENCE.) When I am spinning, I shut my eyes and remember how the clouds turned the brook to silver, and the sun turned the grain in the field to gold, and I sing:



(SINGS, MAKES MOTIONS OF SPINNING WITH HANDS.)

The world spins, and I spin  
I spin flax into thread for the King to use.  
The sun spins straw into gold.  
But sometimes my threads knot and I must stop singing.

SON

All the same, I think my father, the King, would like to hear your song about turning straw into gold. Send your daughter to fetch some of her work, Miller. I will tell the King you are here with your gifts. (SON EXITS LEFT.)

DAUGHTER

(TO PARENTS RIGHT.) Now see what you have done. My spinning is only like everyone else's. And now I must show the King.

MILLER

(PUSHING HER OUT GATE.) Go quickly, quickly. The King will come out to us soon. (DAUGHTER EXITS RIGHT.) My daughter is called by the King! (LOOKING OUT THE GATE AFTER HER.) Oh, what a daughter we have!

WIFE

The King himself wishes to see her spinning! What will the neighbors say to that? (TRUMPET SOUNDS.) Ah--get down. The King is coming!

(THE KING ENTERS LEFT. THEY KNEEL, HOLDING OUT THEIR GIFTS, AS THE KING ENTERS. THE KING IS AN OLD MAN, GREED WRITTEN ON EVERY LINE OF HIM. HE IS FOLLOWED BY HIS SON, EXCITED AND LOOKING EAGERLY AROUND, BUT THE KING'S SON IS SKEPTICAL OF WHAT HE HAS HEARD.)

MILLER

Your Majesty, here is the flour from my fine new wheat-- (MOVES FORWARD ON KNEES, PATS BAG.)

WIFE

And two pies made out of it--(MOVES FORWARD ON KNEES, JIGGLES PIES.)

KING

(WAVING THEIR GIFTS ASIDE.) Yes, yes. (WALKS DOWN STAGE



OF MILLER AND WIFE.) You are good subjects. (CROSSES TO DOWN STAGE RIGHT, STOPS.) But where is the wonderful spinner my son told me about?

MILLER

That is our daughter. (STANDS.)

WIFE

She is the most wonderful girl in the world. (STANDS.)

KING

(CROSSES DOWN STAGE OF MILLER AND WIFE TO LEFT.) Is it she who sang of spinning straw into gold?

WIFE

Oh, yes, King. She sings more sweetly than a nightingale!

MILLER

No one in the village has a voice like hers. The birds in the forest gather to listen to her.

KING

(CROSSES TO RIGHT.) Straw into gold! Straw is easy to get. Miller, bring me straw.

MILLER AND WIFE

(TO KING.) Straw? . . . (TO EACH OTHER.) Straw?

KING

Why not? Haste! (MILLER EXITS RIGHT.) If she can do what you say, she shall marry my son, and be queen of the land. Straw into gold! Gold! Gold! What a wife for you, son!

SON

Nay, father, this cannot be true.

KING

Why not? Why not? All my life I have wanted more gold. I have looked for ways to make more and more. No end to more! Now I have found it. No long digging by a thousand men. No hours of waiting while it is heated! A maid who can spin straw into gold! (CROSSES TO CENTER.) Where is

she? (TO WIFE.) Fetch her to me! She shall come to dwell in the palace, straightway. There is not her like in the land!

WIFE

(MILLERS ENTERS RIGHT WITH STRAW.) Even the King says there is not her like. Wait till the neighbors hear that!

MILLER

Our daughter will dwell in the palace! (CROSSES TO PALACE DOOR LEFT TROTTING, PUTS DOWN STRAW, EXITS DOWN STAGE RIGHT.)

WIFE

She is going to be queen!

SON

(CROSSES TO WIFE.) Surely, good Miller's wife, your daughter is not as wonderful as all this--

WIFE

She is most beautiful, and most kind and gentle--(MILLER ENTERS LEFT, CROSSES TO RIGHT, PUTS DOWN STRAW.)

SON

But her spinning--

MILLER

Nothing like it has ever come off a wheel. (EXIT RIGHT.)

WIFE

It is as fine as a spider's web when she wants it to be. And she makes her threads of this color and that--

SON

But she said sometimes it knotted--(MILLER ENTERS RIGHT WITH STRAW, CROSSES LEFT.)

MILLER

She is so modest. She never believes anything fine about herself. (PUTS DOWN STRAW. EXITS LEFT.)

WIFE

Don't ask her what she can do. She will say no, to everything. But there is nothing she cannot do! (MILLER ENTERS LEFT, CROSSES RIGHT WITH STRAW.)

SON

Ah, yes, but can she spin gold?

MILLER

She can spin anything! You should see her at the wheel--

SON

Ah-h-h-h-h (SEEING HER APPROACH.) She seems lovelier than before.

(DAUGHTER ENTERS RIGHT, CARRYING SPINDLES OF COLORED THREADS.) They bade me bring my most fine-spun thread to the King.

KING

I am the King. (DAUGHTER CROSSES TO CENTER, KNEELS, AFTER GAZING AT HIM, AND LAYS HER SPINDLES AT HIS FEET AS TO HIM SHE SPEAKS.)

DAUGHTER

Here is the best of my work, your Majesty. The best is not worthy of a King.

KING

(LOOKING THROUGH SPINDLES.) Where is the gold one?

DAUGHTER

It is not beautiful enough to bring. I want it to be bright like the sun, and it never is. But this spindle-full is the color of the sky. And this one has the green of leaves in April, and this is like wild roses.

KING

Yes, yes, the colors do very well. But it is the gold one I want.

DAUGHTER

I have made a bad choice then. Shall I fetch the gold spindle?

KING

Never mind now. You can make plenty more, can't you?

DAUGHTER

Yes, King. There is plenty of color left in the pot, and plenty of flax to spin.

KING

What's that? What do you mean?

WIFE

(CROSSES TO DAUGHTER.) She means she can have the gold thread spun very quickly, if you want more.

KING

Good. Get up! (DAUGHTER STANDS.) It is not fitting that you should kneel to me now, for I have a surprise for you. You are going to marry my son, and dwell in the palace. (THE MILLER AND THE WIFE GURGLE WITH DELIGHT, IN SPITE OF THEMSELVES.)

WIFE

Thank the King, Daughter.

MILLER

The King's son will be King someday.

KING

That day will come soon enough. When I have all the gold I want, I shall pass the crown on to my son. The day you are wed, he shall be King and you shall be Queen. Son, take the chain from your neck, and the ring from your finger, and exchange betrothal rights with this maid. (TAKES DAUGHTER'S HAND AND SON'S HAND, CROSSES THEM TOGETHER.)

SON

Miller's daughter, take my chain and give me yours, as has

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been done as a sign of betrothal by King's sons. (WIFE PULLS AT DAUGHTER'S SKIRT, AND SHE KNEELS. THE KING'S SON PUTS HIS CHAIN ON HER.) It shall be a token and a bond between us.

DAUGHTER

(LIFTING HER FLOWER CHAIN OFF.) This is only field flowers I gathered on my way here.

SON

They please me more than gold and jewels.

DAUGHTER

But tomorrow they will be dry and dead.

SON

Then tomorrow you shall make me another. And every tomorrow after. Take my ring and give me yours.

DAUGHTER

Mine is only braided grass.

SON

I shall keep it as long as you keep mine. The rings are a token between us also. (HELPS HER TO HER FEET.)

DAUGHTER

I shall find it hard to learn to be your Queen, but I'll try.

KING

(STEPS BETWEEN THEM BRUSQUELY.) Lead her in. And give her garments such as my son's betrothed shall wear. (SON AND DAUGHTER EXIT LEFT INTO PALACE. MILLER BEGINS TO FOLLOW WITH STRAW INTO PALACE.) That's not enough straw.

MILLER

There is no more at the threshing place, your Majesty.

KING

Miller! Get all the pages and fetch all the straw from the field and mill. Fetch it to the Queen's spinning room. Have

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you straw enough to fill a room?

MILLER AND WIFE

(MILLER AND WIFE FLANK KING.) Yes! Oh, yes! (NOD TOGETHER AND LAUGH.)

KING

Could you fill two rooms?

MILLER AND WIFE

Yes, of course! Oh, yes! (BIGGER NODS, LOUDER AND MORE LAUGHTER.)

KING

Would you believe three doors? (NO RESPONSE FROM MILLER AND WIFE. STOPPED COLD.) They open into three rooms for storing the Queen's spinning. Fill these rooms full. Three roomfuls of straw! I shall have gold enough. (EXITS LEFT WITH EVIL LAUGH AND FLOURISH OF CAPE.)

WIFE

Come. (THE ROOMS ARE EMPTY.) Let us begin gathering straw before the neighbors are all off the streets. (THEY EXIT OFF RIGHT. MILLER AD LIBS.)

RUMPEL

(LAUGHING WITH GLEE, ON HIS HIGH PERCH.) Ho, ho! Ho-ho-o-o-o! (HE RISES AND THROWS SOMETHING INTO THE POT, CIRCLING. THE LIGHTS CHANGE AS HE SINGS, COMING UP ON HIM, AND DOWN ON THE GARDEN SCENE.)

Boil, purple and blue, and dim and grey.  
The garden shall fade and fade away.  
And nobody knows from whence I came,  
Or that Rumeplstiltskin is my name!

(HE IS SO FULL OF TRIUMPH AND SELF-IMPORTANCE THAT HE SHOUTS HIS NAME LOUDER AND LOUDER TO THE AUDIENCE.)

Rumpelstiltskin! R-U-M-P-E-L-S-T-I-L-T-S-K-I-N!  
RUMPELSTILTSKIN!

MOTHER HULDA

Now! What will you do to get a King's son for your pot?



RUMPEL

(STAND AND PACE AROUND DOWNSTAGE OF POT.) Ho! I will go down there and make a bargain with her. I will offer to turn the straw into gold for her, if she will give me the first child born to her when she is Queen . . . I must make haste. (RUMPEL RUNS TO CIRCLE THE POT, CHANTING.)

Three times backward round my pot,  
Then I'll be where I am not.  
Three times backward--(ENDING DOWNSTAGE OF POT.)

MOTHER HULDA

Stop (HAND UP.) Do not take another step. (RUMPEL SLINKS DOWN, BUT OBEYS.) There is no use in going down to the palace until I give you the rule.

RUMPEL

I know it already.

MOTHER HULDA

Oh? What is it?

RUMPEL

Before I can make gold out of straw, I must get the one I do it for to give me something that was dug from deep (DEEP KNEE BEND) under the ground, and something that (LEAPS UP--ARMS HIGH.) sprang from the soil.

MOTHER HULDA

That is right.

RUMPEL

Well! The gold in the chain which the King's son put on the Miller's daughter was dug from (DEEP KNEE BEND.) deep in the ground. And the flowers in the chain she gave him (LEAPS UP AGAIN.) sprang from the soil. So there! I can bargain to turn her straw into gold for the chains. Then I can do it, can't I?

MOTHER HULDA

That will give you the chains. But it will not give you the King's child. (RUMPEL MUTTERS, VERY SULKY.) Will it? (RUMPEL TURNS HIS BACK IN FRONT OF POT.) What is the rule for that? (RUMPEL FOLDS TOGETHER, MORE SULKY THAN EVER.)

Oh, well, if you know already, you don't need me to tell you. (SHE STARTS OFF RIGHT. RUMPEL IS UP LIKE A SHOT AROUND BEHIND POT OBSTRUCTING HER WAY.)

RUMPEL

I don't know it. Tell me. Will you tell me?

MOTHER HULDA

Oh yes, I'll tell you. (TURNS RIGHT.) Before you can spin straw into gold, in exchange for a Queen's child, you must make two other bargains with her.

RUMPEL

Well, (OVER RIGHT SHOULDER, LOOKING BACK AT MOTHER HULDA.) what bargains must I make?

MOTHER HULDA

(CROSSES LEFT, UPSTAGE OF POT.) Twice you must get her to bargain away something else she loves--something that was given to her by another, as a token and a bond between them.

RUMPEL

Once she might do it without thinking, but she'd never do it twice. Let me spin the gold for one bargain.

MOTHER HULDA

Nothing of the sort. It must be twice.

RUMPEL

Perhaps she would rather bargain than die! (TO AUDIENCE.) (TURNS TO GO.) I'll go down and try. (STOPS.) May I go down and try?

MOTHER HULDA

Oh yes, you may try. (EXITS LEFT OFF PLATFORM.)

RUMPEL

Three times backward round my pot,  
Then I'll be where I am not.  
Three times backward, and my door  
Will be where there was none before  
Three times backward, here I go  
To bargain with a Queen below! (THREE TIME AROUND

(MUSIC UP THEN INTO SCENE CHANGE MUSIC.)

Act 2

(SCENE: THE QUEEN'S SPINNING ROOM. ON ONE SIDE, THREE DOORS, GROWING LARGER FROM DOWNSTAGE TO BACK.)

WIFE

(ENTERING RIGHT, STAGGERING WITH STRAW.) To think I have spent the whole night before my daughter's wedding carrying straw.

MILLER

(ENTERING RIGHT, THROWING HIS ONTO THE TOP OF THE HEAP IN DOOR FAR LEFT.) That is the end of what I brought.

WIFE

This will be the end of mine. (DRAGS STRAW ALONG FLOOR.)

MILLER

Don't try to take so much at once.

WIFE

Don't you hear the bells? (STRUGGLING WITH STRAW.) They are calling people to see our daughter made Queen. I must be tidied up in time to go into the church.

MILLER

(WATCHING HER FROM DOOR.) It will be quicker to make two of it.

WIFE

One is enough. (FINAL HEAVE AND FALL--SHE IS CARRIED ACROSS THE ROOM BY HER EFFORTS.)

MILLER

Now, if you made two loads--

WIFE

One is enough. (FROM FLOOR.)

MILLER

I say two is better! And my daughter can spin straw into gold! (HE TURNS TO THE WHEEL WITH A WIDE GESTURE, BUT STOPS SHORT. HE GULPS AND STANDS STARING AT THE WHEEL. HE TOUCHES THE STRAW ON THE SPINDLE. HIS JAW DROPS.)

WIFE

What are you doing over there? (SHE GOES TO THE DOOR AND SUCCEEDS FINALLY IN GETTING HER LOAD TO STAY ON, AND WITH SOME DIFFICULTY STEERS HERSELF TO THE STRAW PILE. SHE MAKES A NUMBER OF PREPARATORY SWINGS OF HER SHOULDERS, AND THEN PITCHES THE STRAW UP ONTO THE PILE. IT COMES BACK INTO HER FACE. SHE GASPS AND WHIRLS, LOOKING QUICKLY TO SEE IF HER HUSBAND HAS CAUGHT HER, BUT SEEING HIM ENGROSSED IN THE WHEEL, SHE RECOVERS HER DIGNITY, GATHERS UP THE STRAW, AND GETS IT ONTO THE PILE.)

MILLER

I'm looking at this wheel.

WIFE

It's just a spinning wheel. (SHE TRIES TO SHUT THE DOOR ON IT, AND HAS PLENTY OF DIFFICULTIES, THE STRAW FALLING OUT EVERY TIME SHE TRIES IT, BUT EVENTUALLY SHE GETS IT SHUT. THE BELLS STOP TOWARD THE END OF THIS.)

MILLER

Of course our daughter can spin more beautifully than anyone--but what if the King should say to her--"Sit right here and spin this very straw into gold for me."

WIFE

(TO WHEEL.) Spinning staw into gold has such a beautiful sound. It seemed as if she could. I felt sure she could. The feeling rose right up in me.

MILLER

It would be terrible if we brought our daughter harm.

WIFE

I would rather die. (THEY EMBRACE. WIFE WIGGLES FANNY AND WEEPS.)

MILLER

(PATTING WIFE.) Oh! She will make the King forget all about spinning straw into gold.

WIFE

(BLOWS NOSE.) I wouldn't be surprised if she could spin straw into gold, if she set her mind to it.

MILLER

She's clever enough. She'd find a way.

(THE KING'S SON ENTERS LEFT WITH FLOWERS, CROSSES TO UPPER RIGHT, SETS DOWN. MILLER RUNS TO DOWNSTAGE OF WHEEL. HE BOWS AND WIFE CURTESIES AND STAYS DOWN.)

WIFE

(HEAD UP.) Do you remember us, King's son? It is our daughter who will become your Queen.

MILLER

(HEAD UP.) We are her parents.

WIFE

(STANDS.) She is our daughter. Is it almost time to set out for the wedding? I heard the bells calling just now.

SON

Those were the bells to call the people from the country, and the far edges of the town. There will be bells again before we set out from the palace.

MILLER

(CROSSES TO SON.) Yesterday we came in our holiday togs, but the night's work for the King has put dust in our hair and down our necks. Do you think there will be time for us to go back to the mill and make ourselves fresh?

WIFE

(CROSSES TO MILLER.) It would never do for us to be a shame to our daughter.

## SON

(CROSSES TO CENTER.) There is no need for you to go back to your mill. Just go into the palace, and one of the serving men will attend you, Miller, (MILLER BEGINS EXIT, GIVES LOOK OF SCORN TO WIFE.) and make you fresh for the wedding. And one of the serving women will wait on your wife. (WIFE FOLLOWS IN TRIUMPH. MILLER AND WIFE EXIT LEFT, AD LIB OFF.)

(FANFARE MUSIC, DAUGHTER ENTERS AND BOWS LEFT IN A NEW GOWN.)

## DAUGHTER

You see, I have learned how to bow to a King already! Of course it wasn't perfect. I suppose it will never be. I am only a girl of the common folk. But I am not afraid to be queen any more, King's son. I will be queen and I can help everyone in the kingdom who is sad and poor. And when I think about that, it seems easy to walk like a queen. (QUEENLY WALK TO CENTER.) Here I am, so full of joy in becoming queen, I forgot you wanted me to weave you another chain.

## SON

Here are the flowers, ready. (LEADS HER TO THEM, UPPER RIGHT.)

## DAUGHTER

(KNEELING, PUTTING HER FACE TO THEM.) They are from my fields! The dew is on them still.

## SON

I gathered them myself. (HE TAKES OUT THREE OF FOUR, CROSSES DOWN STAGE OF DAUGHTER TO FLOWERS AND KNEELS.) Use any but these. These I climbed high to gather. They are to fasten your bride's head-dress.

## DAUGHTER

I'd rather have them than all the jewels in the kingdom. (WORKING ON CHAIN.) I will measure your chain by this. (SHE TOUCHES THE GOLD CHAIN SHE WEARS. THERE IS AN OFF-STAGE NOISE. THE KING ENTERS LEFT FOLLOWED BY THE MILLER AND WIFE.)



SON

(SPEAKING AS KING ENTERS.) You will have to make your chain small. The King has come to tell us to set out.

KING

It is not time to set out yet. (CROSSES TO DAUGHTER.) Before we do that, I must have proof of this maiden's skill in spinning.

DAUGHTER

(STANDING.) I told you there are often knots in my thread. (CROSSES DOWN RIGHT.)

KING

(THROWS OPEN THE FIRST DOOR.) How long will you need to spin this into gold?

DAUGHTER

(TO KING.) I do not understand your jest.

KING

I am not jesting. In the night, I thought to myself: "Her father said she could spin straw into gold, and her mother, too. But parents' word is not always the one to listen to. I will see it done with my own eyes.

DAUGHTER

Straw into gold. (TO AUDIENCE.) Why should anyone wish to do such a thing?

KING

What trick are you trying on me now? You want to keep your gold to yourself, is that it?

DAUGHTER

(CROSS TO WHEEL.) Nay, but King--

KING

Do not say nay. Do not dare say "Nay"! Spin! (FROM DOWN STAGE LEFT, GRABS HER LEFT ARM, PULLS HER IN FRONT OF HIM TOWARD WHEEL.)

KING

Spin, or I will have you put to death!

SON

No! (CROSS TO DAUGHTER. GENERAL OUTCRY.)

DAUGHTER

(TO PARENTS.) I cannot . . . Look what you have done now.

MILLER

Try, Daughter. (CROSS DOWN OF WIFE.) Try.

WIFE

Surely you can find some way.

KING

Let her alone. (BOTH MILLER AND WIFE LEAP BACK.) Maid, you will spin that straw into gold, or die?

WIFE

(KNEELING TO KING.) Do not punish her for our words.

KING

What you said, she must pay for. I will have gold. Rooms full of it! (FROM PALACE DOOR.) Come here. (DAUGHTER GOES TO HIM.) I will give you till the clock strikes three to spin this straw on the distaff into gold. If you do it, the bells shall ring for your wedding, and you shall be queen. If you do not, you shall be put to death, and the bells shall toll for your funeral.

SON

(CROSS BETWEEN DAUGHTER AND KING.) Do not tremble so. My father shall not do this to you.

SON

You heard her say that she cannot. Are you mad, to command such a thing?

KING

(TO SON.) I may be mad, but I am King. (CROSS TO DAUGHTER, UP STAGE OF SON.) Miller's daughter, the time is running out. I shall wait beyond that door. When you have spun this much straw into gold, knock on the door. That much will prove your parents did not lie. If there is no knock before the time is up, I shall send guards to lead you to your death.

SON

I forbid it. (STANDING IN DEFENSE OF DAUGHTER.)

KING

Go to the dungeon room and wait, alone, till this maid spins, or dies.

SON

(STILL BETWEEN DAUGHTER AND KING.) I will not leave her side.

(KING AND SON DRAW SWORDS. THE MILLER REFEREES UP STAGE BETWEEN KING AND SON.)

KING

Then use your sword as a King's son should. (FENCING AS DIALOGUE PROCEEDS.)

SON

You will have to slay me before I will go to the dungeon. A thousand men can not take me alive.

KING

This maid has turned your heart from me. But know this (HALT WITH PARRY HELD OVERHEAD.) when you lift your sword, you lift it against her. She shall pay with her life without waiting to spin, if you continue to fight.

DAUGHTER

Go, King's son, for my sake. (STOP FENCING.) Go, and let me spin the gold.

SON

Can you spin gold?

## DAUGHTER

Let me try.

## SON

That I must know. For her sake I will do your bidding, King, if you give me your word to let me know whether the gold is spun before you order her death.

## KING

You shall know. (MILLER TAKES HIM AWAY LEFT. KING CROSSES TO DAUGHTER.) So you can spin after all!

## DAUGHTER

No. It was to save him I said it. I cannot spin straw into anything at all. Believe me.

## KING

We shall see. And do not trust to my son's help. I gave my word to tell him. Not to set him free. The bolts shall be drawn on the dungeon room. He shall not come forth till I have the gold. Or your life. Spin! (BEGINS FLOURISHING EXIT.)

## WIFE

(FALLS TO KNEES IN KING'S WAY.) Have mercy! [SEE FIGURE 3.]

## KING

Let her spin! (FINISHES EXIT, FIENDISH LAUGH AS DOOR CLOSES.)

(WIFE GOES OUT RIGHT, QUIETLY. THE DAUGHTER STANDS AN INSTANT, CROSSES DOWN RIGHT, THEN GATHERS UP SOME FLOWERS AND BURIES HER FACE IN THEM, WEEPING. RUMPEL PUSHES OPEN THE LITTLE DOOR, AND COMES OUT. HE CREEPS UPON HER SILENTLY IN DELIGHT BEFORE HE SPEAKS.)

## RUMPEL

(ON LEFT.) Why do you weep?

## DAUGHTER

(STARTLED, FALLS BACK.) Oh! . . . Who are you?

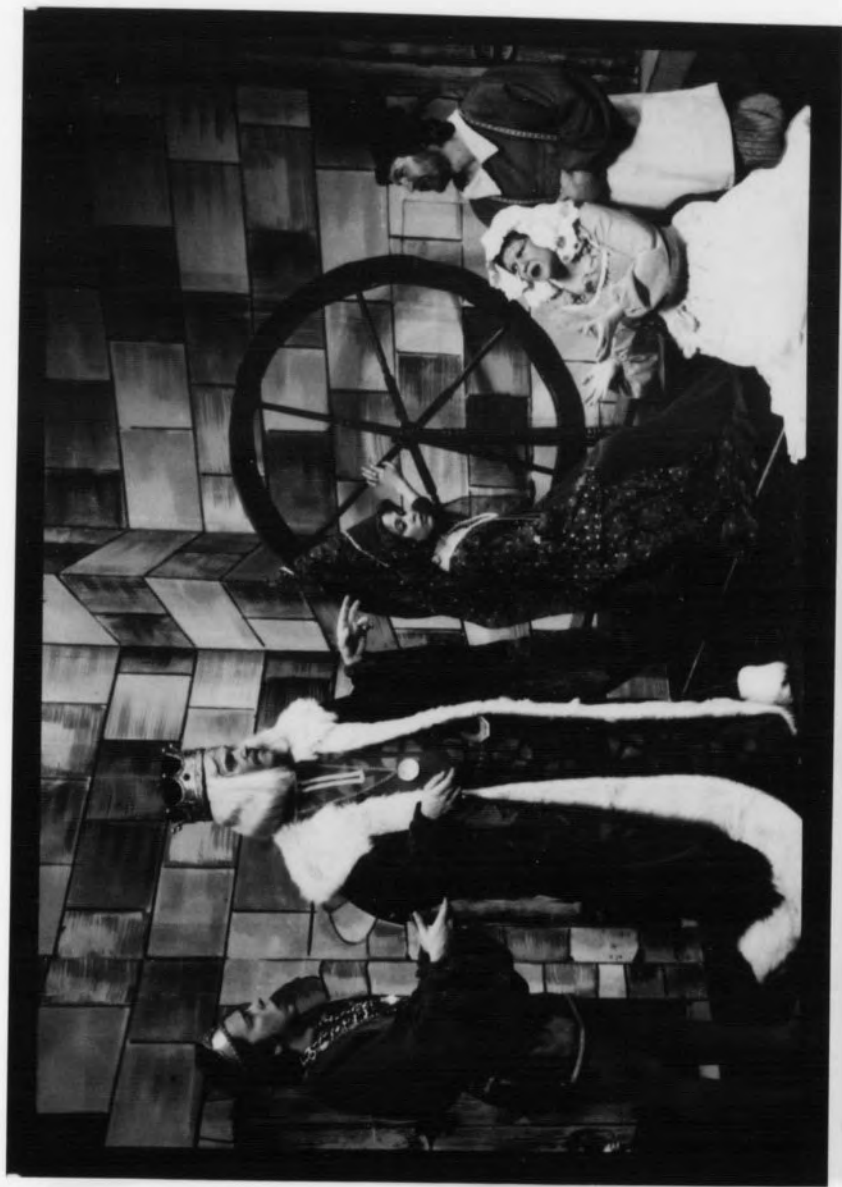


Figure 3

RUMPEL

Someone.

DAUGHTER

Who?

RUMPEL

Someone who wonders why such a pretty maid should weep.

DAUGHTER

I must spin straw into gold, or be put to death. No one can spin straw into gold.

RUMPEL

I can. (ON ELBOW.)

DAUGHTER

Oh, will you?

RUMPEL

If you give me what I ask.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS TO WHEEL.) What do you ask?

RUMPEL

Something! (TURNS AWAY.)

DAUGHTER

What?

RUMPEL

Will you give them to me? (TURNS SLOWLY AROUND.)

DAUGHTER

Tell me what they are, and I can answer.

RUMPEL

(SKIPS AND RUBS HIS HANDS TOGETHER, THEN COMES CLOSE TO HER, LEFT, TOUCHING THE CHAIN SHE WEARS.) This.



DAUGHTER

No! (STEPS BACK.) I cannot give you that. The King's son put it there around my neck for a betrothal token.

RUMPEL

(BEHIND HER. DANCING TO TOUCH THE FLOWERS THE KING'S SON CHOSE FOR HER HEADRESS.) And this.

DAUGHTER

I can't give you that, either.

RUMPEL

(SULKING, CROSS-LEGGED ON THE FLOOR ON RIGHT OF DAUGHTER.) Very well!

DAUGHTER

I'll give you jewels far finer than those. (TO HIM.)

RUMPEL

I do not want jewels.

DAUGHTER

(TURNING AWAY.) But I can't give you my betrothal chain.

RUMPEL

Very well.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS TO FLOWERS.) Here are other flowers, just as beautiful.

RUMPEL

I do not want other flowers.

DAUGHTER

But how can I give you the gift the King's son brought me?

RUMPEL

Very well. (DAUGHTER WEEPS. RUMPEL PEEPS AT HER.)

DAUGHTER

(STANDS.) I do not want to die!

RUMPEL

(STANDING.) Give me the chain! (STEPS TO HER.) Give me the flowers! And the straw will be gold in the wink of an eye.

DAUGHTER

(TURNS TO RIGHT.) I cannot give you those. (RUMPEL STAMPS HIS FOOT, AND SHAKES HIS ARMS AND FISTS, RUNNING AROUND AND JUMPING UP AND DOWN IN RAGE, SQUEAKING AND CHITTERING IN A FURY.)

RUMPEL

Don't put me in a temper. I shall fly to pieces.

DAUGHTER

I only said I can't. (RUMPEL REPEATS THE OUTBREAK WORSE.)

RUMPEL

I can't stand this . . . Goodbye! (TO DOOR.)

DAUGHTER

Don't go. (FOLLOWS TO DOOR.)

RUMPEL

(COCKING HIS HEAD TO ONE SIDE.) Will you give me what I ask?

DAUGHTER

(FINGERING CHAIN, TOUCHING FLOWERS. TO AUDIENCE.)  
Whatever shall I do? (CLOCK BEGINS TO STRIKE THREE.)

RUMPEL

(CROSS DOWN LEFT.) Shall I spin the straw into gold?

DAUGHTER

Yes! (FOLLOWS.)

RUMPEL

Shall I have the chain, and the three small flowers?

DAUGHTER

Yes, yes! Only haste! (THROWS CHAIN AND FLOWERS AT HIM. STANDS UP STAGE AGAINST WALL RIGHT. RUMPEL DANCES UP TO THE WHEEL, CHUCKLING AND CAPERING ON THE WAY. HE JUMPS UP ON SPINNING STOOL: TURNING SPINNING MOVEMENTS INTO MAGIC. LIGHTS FLASH, MUSIC PLAYS AND THE WHEEL WHIRLS FASTER AND FASTER. HE SUDDENLY HOLDS QUIET, AS IF LISTENING INTENTLY.)

RUMPEL

It is done! Look and see.

DAUGHTER

(RUNS TO FIRST DOOR. OVERWHELMED AT THE MASS OF SHINING GOLD.) It is really true!

RUMPEL

(FOLLOWS HER.) Is not that worth a chain, and a few field flowers?

DAUGHTER

Alas, what will the King's son say? I have given away his tokens. (RUMPEL BEGINS TO PRANCE ABOUT HER, HIS EYES ON HER HAND, CHUCKLING AND SQUEAKING.)

RUMPEL

This is once.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS DOWN RIGHT.) What are you thinking of?

RUMPEL

I am thinking of twice.

DAUGHTER

Twice? What do you mean? Twice as much gold? It would please the King.

RUMPEL

I will turn more straw into gold. (CROSS TO DAUGHTER.)  
For something.

DAUGHTER

For what?

RUMPEL

Something. (TURNS AWAY.)

DAUGHTER

What?

RUMPEL

(DARTING AND TOUCHING HER RING.) That!

DAUGHTER

My ring? (PULLS HAND AWAY AND HIDES IT.) No! That is the  
last of the things the King's son gave me. I will not part  
with that.

RUMPEL

(PRANCING TO HER, MAKING HER RETREAT.) Give me the ring,  
Miller's daughter. Give me the ring for double the gold.  
Make a bargain, Queen. Much gold for a silly ring.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS DOWN RIGHT.) Do not call it silly. The King's son  
gave it to me as a token, and he lies in a locked room for  
my sake.

RUMPEL

(FOLLOWING HER TOO CLOSE.) Give me your token for gold--  
for a world full of gold. Bargain with me, Miller's daugh-  
ter. Bargain with me, Queen.

DAUGHTER

I will not give it to you. (CLOCK CHIMES.) It is time.  
Go away from here. Go away, and never come back.

RUMPEL

Very well. (HE OPENS THE LITTLE DOOR AND NEARLY DISAPPEARS.)

KING

(OFF STAGE LEFT.) She will pay! (KING STRIKES ON THE DOOR.)

RUMPEL

(STICKING HIS HEAD THROUGH THE DOOR.) If you tell anyone I spun the gold, it will turn back to straw. (HE WHISKS THE DOOR SHUT AS KING ENTERS LEFT.)

KING

(CROSS TO DOOR LEFT, FLINGS OPEN DOOR.) Gold! It is true! Gold! Yellow gold! See it shine! All this out of straw from the fields. What a wonderful girl. (CROSS TO DAUGHTER.) You shall be queen this hour. Every day, you shall spin again. Set the bells ringing!

DAUGHTER

Nay, King! Do not start the bells till I explain. I cannot spin gold every day, King. This is all the gold I can ever spin, ever in all my life.

KING

(CROSS TO WHEEL.) If you can do it once, you can do it twice.

DAUGHTER

No. I cannot do it again. You do not believe me, but I cannot.

KING

(CROSS TO SECOND DOOR, THROWING IT OPEN.) Perhaps you would rather die than do it again? We shall see. You shall spin this before you take a step toward the church. (STEPS TO DOOR.) You shall spin it before my son comes out of the dungeon. (A FEW MORE STEPS TO DOOR.) You shall spin it before the clock strikes four, or you shall be put to death. (HE STALKS OFF LEFT.)

## DAUGHTER

I wish I hadn't sent the spinning man away. (SHE TRIES TO OPEN THE LITTLE DOOR.) How did he get out of there? (CROSS TO DOOR, KNOCKS.) Little man! (THERE IS NO RESPONSE. SHE GOES TO PILE OF FLOWERS UP RIGHT.) I will finish the chain for the King's son. (SHE WORKS A BIT.) I shall never be queen now. (SHE SOBS BITTERLY, HER FACE IN HER HANDS. RUMPEL PEEPS OUT, AND THEN CREEPS UPON HER SILENTLY. HE PEERS AT THE RINGS ON HER HAND CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF, AND FINALLY DARTS A FINGER OUT TO TOUCH IT.)

## RUMPEL

(TOUCHES RING. DAUGHTER JUMPS BACK.) Why are you weeping so bitterly?

## DAUGHTER

The King has ordered me to turn more straw into gold, all that room full. Will you do it again?

## RUMPEL

Will you give me the ring?

## DAUGHTER

It is better to let you have this ring, than to have the King's Son in a dungeon. I will give it to you.

## RUMPEL

(STROLLS AWAY LEFT, THEN HESITATES.) I must have one thing more.

## DAUGHTER

Whatever it is, I must give it to you. (RUMPEL TAKES THE FLOWER CHAIN SHE WAS WORKING ON, AND PUTS IT OVER HIS HEAD. THEN HE DANCES TO THE THIRD DOOR.)

## RUMPEL

How much is there this time?

## DAUGHTER

(STANDING.) That is not the right door.

## RUMPEL

There is straw in here.



DAUGHTER

(OPENING SECOND DOOR.) This is the room he bade me spin.

RUMPEL

There is no use in spinning this one room full. The King will only order you to spin this other.

DAUGHTER

That is true! The more gold he has, the more he wants.

RUMPEL

What will you give me to spin (CROSS TO DOOR.) all that into gold, too?

DAUGHTER

I have nothing left to give.

RUMPEL

(CROSS TO WHEEL.) Then give me a promise.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS TO RIGHT.) Promise? Tell me quickly.

RUMPEL

Promise me the first child born to you when you are Queen.

DAUGHTER

That isn't likely to ever happen.

RUMPEL

Will you promise me?

DAUGHTER

If the King orders me to spin this great room full, will you come and spin it?

RUMPEL

If you will give me the promise.

DAUGHTER

I will give it. Begin on this, (CROSS TO DOOR.) or there will not be time. RUMPEL DANCES JOYFULLY BY THE WHEEL, AS BEFORE, EXCEPT THAT THE LIGHTS AND SOUNDS ARE MORE BRILLIANT. HE STOPS AND LISTENS, AS BEFORE.)

RUMPEL

It is done. (SHE OPENS THE DOOR TO THE SECOND ROOM. THE STRAW IS GOLD. THEN OPENS THE DOOR TO THE LAST ROOM. IT IS STILL STRAW.)

DAUGHTER

You will not forget about this room full?

RUMPEL

(ON HIS WAY TO LITTLE DOOR.) I will not forget.

DAUGHTER

But how will you know whether he orders it or not? You may be far away.

RUMPEL

(FROM DOOR.) I shall know.

(THE DOOR IS FLUNG OPEN. RUMPEL LEAPS INTO THE DOOR OF THE LAST ROOM, CLOSING THE DOOR AFTER HIM. THE KING ENTERS, THE DOOR OF THE SECOND ROOM IS OPEN, SHOWING THE SHINING GOLD. THE MILLER AND HIS WIFE HAVE ALSO ENTERED, PEEKING IN RIGHT. VOICES OFF. DAUGHTER RUNS TO MEET THE KING AT PALACE DOOR.)

DAUGHTER

It is all finished, King. Call your son.

KING

You did it, then!

MILLER

(ENTERING THROUGH GATE.) She is saved!

WIFE

(ENTERING, CROSS TO DAUGHTER, EMBRACE.) I told you she would find a way. My darling, my daughter, my wonderful, wonderful child!

DAUGHTER

Now will you set him free? Your son?

KING

Suppose, (CROSS DOWN RIGHT WITH DAUGHTER.) my clever lass, you do just one thing more, before I do that. Here is one more room full of straw. Why not just spin it into gold before we start to church?

DAUGHTER

I will make a bargain with you, King. I will spin this one more room full into gold, if you will promise never to ask me to spin gold again.

KING

(CROSS LEFT.) That's a poor bargain, Miller's daughter.

DAUGHTER

Why should I go on making gold all my life? Look at all there is here. And if you will let this be the end, I'll make all this room full more.

MILLER

(TO DAUGHTER.) Hush, daughter. Don't anger the King.

WIFE

(FOLLOWING.) He will think of putting you to death again.

DAUGHTER

Well, if I must do this or die, I may as well die today as after awhile. Then you will never have gold for this straw. You will lose it all.

KING

It would make a great deal. Well, then, turn all this to gold, as you did the rest, and I will never ask you to spin again.

DAUGHTER

(TO SPINNING WHEEL.) Leave me alone a little while. It will not take long.

KING

This is a wonderful thing you do. (CROSS TO WHEEL, LEFT.) I should like to see it happen.

MILLER AND WIFE

(TO SPINNING WHEEL.) Yes, yes, let us watch.

DAUGHTER

(STANDING IN FRONT OF STOOL.) No. I could not do it if I were watched.

WIFE

Don't be afraid of our eyes.

MILLER

Sit down, now.

KING

And begin.

(THEY PUSH HER ONTO THE STOOL, ALL TOGETHER, AND STAND BACK, EXPECTANT.)

WIFE

Put your hand on the wheel. (WIFE LIFTS IT HERSELF. IN SPITE OF THE DAUGHTER'S SHRINKING AWAY FROM HER. THE WHEEL STARTS TO TURN AT THE TOUCH OF HER FOOT, AND THE LIGHTS AND MUSIC PLAY. THEY STAND AMAZED, AND ECSTATIC. WHILE THE WHEEL IS SPINNING, A VOICE IS HEARD IN THE HALL WITH-OUT.)

SON

Out of my way! (VOICES OFF-STAGE.)

KING

(AS SON COMES FLYING IN.) He fights like a hundred--  
(DAUGHTER GOES TO SON WITH CRY OF JOY.)

DAUGHTER

You are safe! (CRY FROM ALL, AS SHE LEAVES THE WHEEL.)

KING

Stay at your spinning! (POINTING AT STOOL.)

DAUGHTER

I forgot--(DAUGHTER GOES BACK TO THE WHEEL. IT RUNS DOWN.)

WIFE

Why do you stop!

DAUGHTER

It stops when it is done.

KING

It can't be done as soon as this, can it?

DAUGHTER

(BREATHLESS.) I don't know. (THE KING RUSHES TO THIRD DOOR AND OPENS IT.)

KING

Gold! Gold! Gold!

MILLER

(AT SECOND DOOR.) Our daughter did it.

WIFE

(RUNS TO FIRST DOOR.) Gold!

SON

(TO DAUGHTER AT CENTER. DAUGHTER STANDS.) You are more wonderful than any of them know. Where is my chain?

DAUGHTER

I bargained for the gold with it. Are you angry?

SON

You are my queen. What does a chain matter? . . . The people are waiting, King. Shall we set forth.

KING

Yes, but first . . .

(SON KNEELS. KING GIVES HIM CROWN AND KNEELS. SON STANDS AND LEADS PROCESSION OUT. FANFARE.)

(RUMPEL'S DOOR OPENS. HE ENTERS GLEEFULLY AND GOES DOWN CENTER, FIENDISHLY CHANTING.)

RUMPEL

For one year more, I brew and bake,  
And then I shall a King's son take,  
And nobody'll know from whence I came,  
Or that Rumpelstiltskin is my name!

(CURTAIN. MUSIC UP. SCENE CHANGE. MUSIC FADES AS CURTAIN RISES.)

### Act Three

(SCENE 1: IN THE KING'S GARDEN, A YEAR LATER. RUMPEL-STILTSKIN IS NOWHERE VISIBLE. THE EDGE OF THE WORLD IS DIM AND UNOBSTRUSIVE, ABOVE. CRADLE IS AT RIGHT CENTER. THE MILLER'S WIFE SITS SINGING AT RIGHT OF CRADLE. THE MILLER, WIFE, THE KING, ALL SIT WITH THEIR EYES BENT ON THE CHILD IN ADORATION, MILLER BEHIND WIFE, KING AT LEFT OF CRADLE.)

KING

He is sound asleep. He should be there (INDICATING PAL-ACE STEP.) where the light is soft and dim.

MILLER

I will carry him.

KING

No. I shall carry him.

MILLER

(PICKING UP CRADLE AT ONE END.) He is my grandson.

KING

So is he mine. (THE TWO SQUABBLE OVER THE CRADLE.)

WIFE

(QUIETING THEM.) A little King's son. And our daughter is his mother. Look! A smile passed over his face just then! He is dreaming. What a wonder-child, to dream, when he is so tiny and so small!

MILLER

He is not small. See how round his arm is! He will be the strongest man in the whole kingdom, in his day! (DAUGHTER ENTERS LEFT WITH SON.)

WIFE

(CROSSING TO DAUGHTER.) Oh, daughter, what a child you have brought into this world!

KING

(STICKING FINGER IN CRADLE.) See, his little fingers curl around my big one, even in his sleep.

MILLER

(FINGER IN CRADLE.) So will they around mine.

KING

My son was like this once. I had forgotten that. My mind was so full of gold.

WIFE

(CROSS TO CRADLE, FIXING BLANKET.) You'll awaken him, between you.

DAUGHTER

Yes, let him sleep.

MILLER

We will carry him in. (MILLER AND WIFE LIFTING END OF CRADLE.) You lift your end too high.

WIFE

(THEY MOVE CRADLE LEFT.) No, yours is too low.



KING

We are spoiling his sleep.

DAUGHTER

(DIRECTING THEM FROM STEP.) Leave the cradle here, by the steps. (EXIT ALL RIGHT, CLOSING GATE. SON AND DAUGHTER CROSS RIGHT.) How happy they are to have a baby in the palace.

SON

The old King, my father, even forgets his gold, to wonder at him.

DAUGHTER

No one is as happy as I! To please them all in the court, I go quiet (MOCKING WALK RIGHT.) and like a Queen. But if I did what I feel like doing, my feet wouldn't touch the ground for joy. (THEY HOLD HANDS AND SWING IN A CIRCLE, LAUGHING.)

SON

We will please no one but ourselves. (DAUGHTER GOES AROUND ONCE, THEN SHE RUNS TO BABY, KNEELS.)

DAUGHTER

It's good that you don't see how wild we are! That is because we are mad with joy about you, little King's son. Are you warm enough? Do you think he should have just a little more to cover him?

SON

(CROSSING TO FLOWERS, RIGHT, LIFTING THEM FROM THE BENCH.) Use these.

DAUGHTER

No, I am weaving these for you.

SON

(CROSSING TO GATE, RIGHT.) The field are purple and white with bloom outside the gate. I'll bring him some. (SON GOES. DAUGHTER SETTLES DOWN TO WEAVE THE REST OF THE ALMOST-FINISHED FLOWER CHAIN. RUMPEL PUSHES OPEN THE LITTLE DOOR, AND ENTERS. HE MOVES NOISELESSLY TO HER.)

HE SITS BESIDE HER, WATCHING HER INTENTLY, SMILING TRIUMPHANTLY. SHE RISES TO LOOK AT THE BABY. TURNING BACK, SHE SEES RUMPEL. SHE SCREAMS.)

DAUGHTER

(RUMPEL LAUGHS SILENTLY, HIS EYES UNWAVERING.) What--what--what do you want? (RUMPEL LAUGHS.) Oh, go away! (PUTS BODY BETWEEN RUMPEL AND BABY.) I didn't think it would ever happen.

RUMPEL

(ADVANCING TO HER.) I have come for my bargain.

DAUGHTER

That was so long ago. It couldn't still be true. I had forgotten all about it.

RUMPEL

Things do not end because you forget them. (LUNGES TOWARD HER.) Give me the baby.

DAUGHTER

(CROSSES RIGHT, BACKING UP.) Oh, no! I can't give you my baby!

RUMPEL

(FOLLOWING HER.) There's no use in saying that. I did what cannot be done. I turned straw to gold.

RUMPEL

Give me the child.

DAUGHTER

(BACK TO CRADLE.) He can't do without his mother. (TO KNEES.) He is too little.

RUMPEL

It won't be long he'll need you.

DAUGHTER

What do you mean to do with him?

RUMPEL

Something.

DAUGHTER

Oh, what?

RUMPEL

Something. (CROSSES RIGHT.)

DAUGHTER

(STANDING.) Will you be good to him?

RUMPEL

(CROSSES RIGHT FURTHER.) Never mind.

DAUGHTER

(FOLLOWING HIM.) You have some terrible plan in your mind.  
(RUMPEL LAUGHS.) I can tell by the way you laugh.

RUMPEL

(TURNING ON HER.) You must keep your bargain, for all that.

DAUGHTER

(KNEELS, PLEADING.) I will give you back your gold! I will give you everything I have. The young King, my husband, will give you broad lands and heaped-up treasure.

RUMPEL

I'd rather have a living thing than all the gold in the earth and stars. (HE STAMPS. GOES TOWARD CRADLE.)

DAUGHTER

(LEAPS TO HER FEET.) Don't take him from me.

RUMPEL

(CROSS LEFT.) Give him to me!

## DAUGHTER

(BETWEEN RUMPEL AND BABY.) Take me, instead. Do anything you want to me. Only let my little son stay safe with his father. (ON KNEES.) Go away and let him be. Go away. Go away!

## RUMPEL

Don't do that! (CROSS DOWN RIGHT.) Don't do it any more. It upsets me.

## DAUGHTER

(EXHAUSTED, HEAD DOWN.) Go away--

## RUMPEL

Don't do it! It makes me want to say--"You can keep your child."

## DAUGHTER

Say it! Say it!

## RUMPEL

(STAMPING.) No, no, no, no, no, no, no! I only want to say it; I don't want to do it! Don't look at me. I don't like to feel like this.

## DAUGHTER

You feel sorry. (STANDS.) You will have mercy. (CROSSING TO HIM.) You will not take him away.

## RUMPEL

Yes, I will! Don't look at me! (HE COVERS HIS EYES AND JUMPS UP AND DOWN.)

## DAUGHTER

(VERY CLOSE.) I am looking at you. I shall keep looking at you until you promise me. Look! Look! (SHE STRETCHES OUT HER ARMS.) Make me a promise. Say you will leave me my little King's son. Little spinning man! I don't know your name. I don't know what to call you--

## RUMPEL

(LAUGHS WHEN SHE SAYS SHE DOESN'T KNOW HIS NAME, THEN UNCOVERS HIS EYES.) I will make you a promise.

DAUGHTER

Yes--

RUMPEL

I have the strangest name in the world. I give you three guesses. Three times three guesses. If you can tell me my name, I will not make you keep your bargain.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS LEFT.) Three times three guesses! Only nine guesses?

RUMPEL

(RUBBING HANDS TOGETHER.) Now I feel the way I like to feel.

DAUGHTER

I've heard many strange names.

RUMPEL

Why not try them, one at a time? You have plenty of guesses.

DAUGHTER

So I have. Well, are you called Mugwart?

RUMPEL

No. (HE COLLAPSES WITH LAUGHTER.)

DAUGHTER

Are you called Frizzle Frazzle?

RUMPEL

No. (MORE LAUGHTER.)

DAUGHTER

Are you called Lugwrench?

RUMPEL

(ROLLS ON GROUND.) No, no, no, no. Go on. (JUMPS UP.)  
Guess some more, Miller's daughter. Guess some more, Queen.

## DAUGHTER

(TURNS AWAY.) You must give me time to think. I was wrong to waste my guesses without thinking.

## RUMPEL

(VERY NEAR HER AND BABY, LEFT.) I didn't say I'd give you time. Come, what is my name?

## DAUGHTER

I must ask my husband for help. I must ask my father, and mother. You will not deny me time for that! (RUMPEL TURNS HIS BACK. SHE STRETCHES OUT HER ARMS.) I am begging you.

## RUMPEL

Very well. Ask your husband. And all the fine folks in the palace. (SINGING OFFSTAGE. HE STAMPS.) You have been too slow. I hear someone coming. Give me the baby. (HE STARTS FOR IT. SHE BLOCKS HIM, AS THE YOUNG KING'S VOICE, SINGING, DRAWS NEAR. RUMPEL WHIPS OUT HIS LITTLE DOOR. DAUGHTER RUNS TO MEET THE SON.)

## DAUGHTER

Will you help me!

## SON

(PUTS THE CHAIN ON.) Help you? How?

## DAUGHTER

You must think. Think hard! What is the strangest name you know? (SON LAUGHS.) Don't laugh. Tell me! It must be a very strange name.

## SON

What is the matter, little Queen? You are frightened. Why do you cling to me so?

## DAUGHTER

You must not ask me questions. You must tell me names. Quick now. You have been about the world. What is the strangest name you have ever heard?

SON

(CROSS RIGHT.) I have heard many names that sounded strange to me. But they did not sound strange to those who used them.

DAUGHTER

Still, you must have heard one that sounded queer to you.

SON

Not after I thought about it. One name is as good as another.

DAUGHTER

(GOES TO HIM AT DOWN RIGHT.) Then call my father and mother. They go about among the people. They will surely know names to tell me.

SON

Whatever you wish, little Queen. (STARTS OUT GATE, RIGHT.)

DAUGHTER

Don't leave me alone. (HE STOPS.)

SON

Shall I not fetch the others?

DAUGHTER

Call them. Stand here and call.

SON

(CALLS OUT GATE, RIGHT.) Miller, bring your wife into the garden and send for my father as well.

DAUGHTER

They mustn't ask me why.

SON

I'll see to that.



WIFE

(ENTERING, CROSS TO CENTER, FOLLOWED BY THE OTHERS.) What do you want?

SON

We are trying to think of strange names. The strangest name will have a reward. Now, speak.

(PAUSE. ALL PACE AND THINK.)

KING

(FROM DOWN RIGHT. HIS "WELL" STOPS EVERYONE'S MOVEMENT. ALL WATCH HIM.) Well, once, when I was journeying in a land where alligators blinked on the banks of the streams, and parrots flew in twos high in the sky, I met a man named after a river and the river's name was: Pappaloappaloapam.

DAUGHTER

Poppapoappalo--what comes next?

MILLER

(ADVANCING TOWARD KING.) Pappaloappaloappaloappaloppale--

KING

(ADVANCING TOWARD MILLER.) NO, no, no. Pappaloappaloapam

(KING AND MILLER, NOSE TO NOSE, PROFILE FROM DOWN CENTER.)

MILLER

Why do you cut me short?

KING

(LOUDER) Because it is time you stopped.

MILLER

(TOPPING KING'S VOLUME.) WHAT GROUND have you for saying such a thing?

KING

(LOUDER AND CLOSER.) Enough is enough. More is too much.

MILLER

(LOUDEST.) Why should you say "enough" to me?

DAUGHTER

(CROSS TO BETWEEN THEM, PUSHING THEM APART.) Oh, hush, father! Hush--

MILLER

(CROSSING LEFT WITH DAUGHTER.) Do you say hush to me, Daughter. Was it not your mother and I who told the King you could make gold out of straw?

WIFE

(CROSS TO MILLER.) And wasn't it that very thing that brought about all the rest?

DAUGHTER

Ah, yes. No, no, no, father. (WALKS TO MILLER, DOWN LEFT.) I want more names, that's all. (CROSS TO WIFE.) Mother, it is your turn.

WIFE

(PACING, DELIVERS LINES TO EACH.) Well, when I was wandering in our own village the other day, I heard one man say to another. "Now that the Miller's daughter is Queen, I suppose he lines his stomach with fine wines and roasted meats. And just then the Miller passed by, and the man said (ELBOW'S KING.) "There goes Roast-Ribs now." I call that a very strange name, Roast-Ribs. (ALL LAUGH.)

MILLER

Are you making a laughing stock of me? (CROSS TO WIFE.)

DAUGHTER

Roast-Ribs! That is surely a strange name.

MILLER

(YELLING AT WIFE.) Before my own daughter!

DAUGHTER

It is a funny name. (ALL LAUGH. WIFE IGNORES MILLER.)

MILLER

(TO WIFE.) Roast-Ribs! What do you mean by calling me that?

WIFE

(NOSE TO NOSE.) I called you nothing. I was only saying what I heard.

KING

I suppose, perhaps, the man who said it meant you looked as if your ribs were padded well with roasted meats.  
(LAUGHS LOUDLY.)

WIFE

(TO KING.) And what if they are? It's well enough he has some weight to him. (SLAPS MILLER IN STOMACH.) What sort of job would he make, running a mill and grinding meal for a kingdom, if he were a reed blown in the wind, like you. You pipestem! (BACKING UP KING TO RIGHT.)

MILLER

(CROSS TO KING.) You yardstick! (ALL LAUGH.)

WIFE

You sheepshanks! (ALL LAUGH.)

KING

(INDIGNANT.) Sheepshanks!

WIFE

You spindleshanks! (ALL LAUGH.)

DAUGHTER

Spindleshanks! Oh, these are the very strangest names I ever heard! You shall all have rewards, for one name is as strange as another.

SON

Lead the way, Spindleshanks. (KING GOES OUT LEFT.) Come Roast-Ribs. (MILLER FOLLOWS. THEY GO, ALL LAUGHING AND PATTING EACH OTHER ON THE BACK. EXIT LEFT. RUMPEL ENTERS BEHIND THEIR BACKS, AND IS SITTING GRINNING AT THE DAUGHTER WHEN SHE TURNS AROUND, STILL STANDING RIGHT.)

RUMPEL

Well, what is my name?

DAUGHTER

Is it Roast-Ribs?

RUMPEL

No! It is not Roast-Ribs.

DAUGHTER

Is it Sheepshanks!

RUMPEL

No! (IMPATIENTLY.) It is not Sheepshanks.

DAUGHTER

Is it Spindleshanks?

RUMPEL

No, it is not spindleshanks! Guess again! (JUMPING UP AND DOWN TOWARDS DAUGHTER.) What is my name? What is my name? What is it? What is it? What is it?

DAUGHTER

Keep still. I can't guess so soon. I have only three guesses left.

RUMPEL

(CROSS LEFT.) A thousand guesses would be no better. Nobody knows from whence I came. Nobody's ever hear my name.

DAUGHTER

Not even where you live?

RUMPEL

Nobody ever comes there!

DAUGHTER

Where is it?

RUMPEL

Somewhere. (SLYLY GAZING TOWARD DOOR.)

DAUGHTER

Which way is it from here?

RUMPEL

There is a long way, and a short way, (DAUGHTER GOES BEHIND HIM, FOLLOWS HIS ARMS.) if you go east till you come west, or west till you come east, that is the long way. If you go round and round, (ARM GESTURES.) and say the right words, the door is where you want it. That is the short way.

DAUGHTER

(FROM RIGHT.) What are the right words?

RUMPEL

Never mind.

DAUGHTER

(FROM LEFT.) How long does the long way take from here and back?

RUMPEL

(CROSS RIGHT.) Half a year, and a day besides.

DAUGHTER

(FOLLOWING.) How long does the short way take?

RUMPEL

(WHEELING.) Like that.

DAUGHTER

Can nobody but you go the short way to where you live?

RUMPEL

Not unless I leave the door open. (HALF INDICATING DOOR.)

DAUGHTER

What door? (CROSS TO RUMPEL.)

RUMPEL

Never mind. (TURNS AWAY.) It doesn't matter, because I never will. And even if I should (ADVANCING ON HER.) you wouldn't come, because you'd be afraid.

DAUGHTER

(NO RETREAT.) What should I be afraid of?

RUMPEL

(CROSS UP CENTER. TURNS, MYSTERIOUS GESTURES, SPINS OF DAUGHTER DURING SPEECH.) As soon as you put a finger, or a hair of your head through the door, you'd feel a wild wind. If you went on, it would whirl you round, and round, till you came to a high hill, and on it a little house. And before the house a fire burning, and around the fire you'd see me dancing and maybe shouting my name to the sky and the air. Now, Mrs. Queen, what is my name? (HE IS THREATENINGLY CLOSE ON HER LEFT.)

DAUGHTER

Let me see--(TURNS AWAY.)

RUMPEL

It's no good hunting in your mind for it. You've never heard it.

DAUGHTER

I'm not. (ONE STEP RIGHT.) I'm thinking up ways to make you feel sorry for me.

RUMPEL

No, no, no, no! (JUMPING UP AND DOWN.) I will not give up the child. I won't! I won't!

DAUGHTER

(TURNS TO HIM.) That isn't what I'm aksing you to do.

RUMPEL

What is it you are asking? (BACKS UP.)

DAUGHTER

Only a little more time. (ONE STEP CLOSE TO HIM.)

RUMPEL

I've given you twice already.

DAUGHTER

(PLEADING.) But I must have more. Your name is very hard to find. I must have a long time.

RUMPEL

(CROSS DOWN RIGHT.) What's the use of that? You'll never find my name, and when that time is up, you'll come crying and praying and going on your knees again.

DAUGHTER

(CROSS DOWN CENTER.) No. Give me a half a year and a day besides, and I'll never ask for time again.

RUMPEL

(TO BABY.) In half a year and a day besides you'll promise to give me the child without any fuss?

DAUGHTER

If I don't find out your name.

RUMPEL

You must come to meet me as if I were the young King your husband, and say (BOWING.) "Here you are again."



DAUGHTER

I will come like that if you give me half a year and a day besides.

RUMPEL

Very well! Cover your eyes. (SHE DOES, FULL FORWARD DOWN CENTER.) I am going away. (HE GOES TO HIS DOOR.) For half a year and one more day, I am going away. (HAVING TROUBLE.) I am going away! (STRUGGLES.)

DAUGHTER

(PEEKS FROM BEHIND HANDS.) Are you gone?

RUMPEL

(STRUGGLING IN THE DOOR.) Not yet. (SHE COVERS EYES AGAIN.)

DAUGHTER

I am going to look.

RUMPEL

No! (FOOT CAUGHT.)

DAUGHTER

I can't keep from looking much longer. (RUMPEL SCRAMBLES THROUGH BACKWARD. HE THRUSTS HIS FACE OUT, AND IS ABOUT TO SPEAK, WHEN SHE LOWERS HER ARM.) I will look when I count five. (RUMPEL PULLS THE DOOR TO, BUT SHUTS IT ON HIS FOOT. HE OPENS IT IN A TEMPER, MAKING FACES AT IT.) One, two, three, four, five--(AS SHE REACHES FIVE, HE SHUTS THE DOOR. IT DOES NOT GO QUITE SHUT. SHE SEES IT MOVE, OR SHE WOULD NOT KNOW IT.) Are you gone? (GOES TO DOOR AT LEFT.) He has left it open. (TO AUDIENCE.) That must be the short way. (SHE PUTS A HAND OUT TO OPEN IT MORE, HESITATES, THEN GOES AHEAD. SHE THRUSTS HER HAND IN A LITTLE WAY, CRIES OUT.) Oh-h-h! (TO AUDIENCE.) Shall I leave my baby here? Suppose I never come back. No. I'll try the long way first. (RUNS TO PALACE DOOR.) Mother! Father! (THEY ENTER QUIETLY.) I must have all the strange names in the whole world. Mother, you must go east until you come west, and Father, go west until you come east. In half a year and one day more, you must be back with names for me. (THEY BOW TO DAUGHTER, TO EACH OTHER AND SPLIT; WIFE EXITS LEFT, MILLER EXITS RIGHT.) Half a year and one day more.

(LIGHTS DOWN, DAUGHTER EXITS INTO PALACE. MUSIC UP ON THE SAME SCENE. IT IS DARK IN THE KING'S GARDEN BELOW. RUMPEL, ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD, IS CIRCLING HIS POT AND SINGING AS LIGHTS SLOWLY COME UP.)

RUMPEL

(WITH HIS BACK TO AUDIENCE.)

Today I bake, tomorrow I brew

And half a year is almost through.

My name, my name, I shout and shout.

For no one's here to find it out.

(RUMPEL LEAPS FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER, AND FRONT, SHOUTING "RUMPELSTILTSKIN!" HE BREAKS INTO LAUGHTER, SO HARD THAT HE FAIRLY ROLLS. MOVES BEHIND POT.)

Now it is time to blow up my fire. Burn, fire burn. Boil, pot, boil. The half year is up. In only one day more I shall bring you something. Something new! Something different!

MOTHER HULDA

(MOTHER HULDA APPEARS LEFT AS HE BENDS OVER THE FIRE.)

So you haven't learned not to shout your name? (HE SCRAMBLES AWAY FROM HER, STILL AFRAID OF HER. HE IS DOWN RIGHT OF POT. THEN HE RECOVERS HIMSELF.)

RUMPEL

I will shout my name if I want to. Rumpelstiltskin! I feel like shouting it, because I have won my bargain. I have a little King's son to put in my pot.

MOTHER HULDA

(TO POT.) Where is he? (RUMPEL TURNS HIS BACK.) (TO RUMPEL:) Where is he?

RUMPEL

He is in the Queen's garden. (RECOVERING SPIRIT.) He's waiting for me. I gave the Queen time. But now the time is up. I felt sorry for her.

MOTHER HULDA

Ah . . .

RUMPEL

I don't any more. (DOWN LEFT OF PLATFORM.) I never will again.

MOTHER HULDA

You might.

RUMPEL

No! (CROSS TO RIGHT. HIS SWAGGER RETURNS.) I have forgotten how it feels to be sorry.

MOTHER HULDA

Perhaps you will remember it when you go to take the baby away from its mother.

RUMPEL

(FLYING INTO A FURY AROUND POT.) No, no, no, no, no, no, no!

MOTHER HULDA

Now, now, now. (SHE STOPS HIM UP LEFT OF POT.) What did I tell you about getting into a temper?

RUMPEL

I've forgotten.

MOTHER HULDA

No you haven't. Look at me. (HE STARTS TO COWER, AS BEFORE, BUT RECOVERS.) I am going to tell you again.

RUMPEL

I don't care if you do, I don't believe it.

MOTHER HULDA

It is just as true when you don't believe it, as when you do. I said if you let your temper get the best of you, you will fly to pieces. (RUMPEL STRUGGLES BETWEEN HIS DEFIANCE AND HIS AWE OF HER, THEN BURSTS OUT LAUGHING, POINTING AT HER.) Rmpelstiltskin, you bad thing. Why do you laugh at me?

RUMPEL

You said I would fly to pieces. I've been in lots of tempers. I've been in frightful tempers, and I never flew to pieces in my life. I don't care about you. I don't

care about anything. I will shout my name if I want. I will be just as (STOMP.) mad as I please. I will never be sorry again. (MIMES ACTION.) I will laugh when I take the King's son from his mother. I will put him in my pot, and make an end of men! (HE LAUGHS IN TRIUMPH.)

MOTHER HULDA

Very well. Only be sure you do not make an end of yourself, instead!

RUMPEL

(WATCHES HER AS SHE GOES. SHOUTS AFTER HER.) Rumpelstiltskin! R-u-m-p-e-l-s-t-i-l-t-s-k-i-n! RUMPELSTILTSKIN! (HE CIRCLES THE POT, CHANTING.)  
Boil, purple and red and gold and green,  
Boil every color that ever was seen.  
For soon my bargain I shall win.  
For my name is--I wonder what the Queen is doing now?

(THE LIGHTS COME UP ON THE GARDEN. DAUGHTER, ENTERING FROM THE PALACE IS LISTENING. RUMPEL'S VOICE NOW SOUNDS FAR AWAY. HE RUNS TO LOOK DOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE HILL.)

SON

(ENTERING FROM PALACE.) What are you doing all alone in the garden, little Queen?

DAUGHTER

I must have a name. I must have one! Call the others to sit by my son. I wish to walk in my field, as I used to. (SON GOES INTO PALACE. DAUGHTER CROSSES TO CRADLE LEFT FOR A LOVING LOOK AT HER BABY.) I am going to save you, little King's son. I am going to find the name myself. (THE SON ENTERS FROM THE PALACE.) Do not leave his side until I am here again. Promise me to stay fast.

SON

I will stay fast. (DAUGHTER RUNS TO THE LITTLE DOOR, PULLS IT OPEN, SHRINKS AWAY.) Watch him carefully. (SHE GIVES A MUFFLED CRY AS SHE GOES OUT THE DOOR.)

SON

(PACING.) I must go to my Queen. She won't be safe without me. Perhaps I can help her.

KING

(ENTERS FROM PALACE.) Is he awake?

SON

Father, will you stay with the baby while I go to find the young Queen? I fear for her safety.

KING

Take as long as you like.

SON

(CROSSING TO GO INTO PALACE LEFT.) You will not leave his side? You will stay fast?

KING

(MILLER AND WIFE ENTER RIGHT.) I will stay fast. (SON GOES OFF LEFT.) He runs off with a will. Aah, young love! But I have much business to attend to and my gold needs counting. Miller, will you and your wife stay with our grandson here, while I step into the castle for a moment?

MILLER

(CROSSING TO CRADLE.) Go as soon as you like.

KING

You must not leave his side an instant.

WIFE

(STEP TOWARD KING, LEFT.) Do you tell me how to care for my daughter's child?

KING

You must stay fast.

WIFE

(ONE MORE STEP TOWARD KING.) Who should stay as fast as we? (THE KING GOES OFF LEFT INTO PALACE.)

MILLER

Why do you think the old King goes to his palace?

WIFE

(TALKING TO CRADLE.) It is likely he has gone to hear how the people praise his little grandson. Everyone admires him so.

MILLER

It would be that. (CROSS TO GARDEN.) There is dancing by our mill today. (DANCE STEP.)

WIFE

All the neighbors will be saying fine things of the child.

MILLER

It would be good to hear them.

WIFE

(CROSS TO CENTER.) It would not take long to get there and back.

MILLER

(INCHING TOWARD GATE, RIGHT.) The child is safe in the garden here.

WIFE

No one can enter from without, except by knocking at the gate.

MILLER

We will not be gone but a short while. (EXIT THROUGH GATE, RIGHT.)

WIFE

We will hasten our steps. (WIFE CROSSES BACK TO BABY THEN OUT RIGHT.)

DAUGHTER

(ENTERS BACK OF PLATFORM. RUMPEL IS FAST ASLEEP, DOWNSTAGE OF POT. SHE LOOKS ABOUT IN FEAR AND AMAZEMENT. RUMPEL STRETCHES AND YAWNS. DAUGHTER LEAPS SOUNDLESSLY BACK OUT OF SIGHT.)



## RUMPEL

Ah! Now is the time! (HE CIRCLES THE POT, CHANTING.)  
 Today I brew, tomorrow I bake,  
 And now I shall the King's child take.  
 For nobody knows from whence I came,  
 Or that--  
 (RUMPEL BURNS HIS FINGER, AND HOPS AROUND SHAKING IT AND  
 SUCKING IT. HE RETURNS TO THE POT AND CHANTS AGAIN.)  
 For nobody knows from whence I came,  
 Or that RUMPELSTILTSKIN is my name!  
 Three times backward around my pot,  
 Then I shall be where I am not.  
 Three times backward, and my door  
 Will open where there was none before.  
 Three times backward, here I go,  
 To fetch the baby from below!  
 (HE WHIRLS DOWN OFF LEFT. DAUGHTER RUNS TO LOOK AFTER HIM,  
 WHEN HE IS WELL OUT OF SIGHT.)

## DAUGHTER

(TO AUDIENCE.) What shall I do? (SHE RETURNS AND MIMICS  
 RUMPEL'S CHARM. IT WORKS. SHE CRIES OUT, AND DISAPPEARS  
 OFF LEFT. JUST AS SHE DOES SO, RUMPEL IS SEEN COMING  
 THROUGH THE DOOR, LOOKING AT THE BABY IN THE CRADLE. HE  
 CLAPS HIS HANDS AND HOPS WITH SATISFACTION. HE LIFTS THE  
 BABY AND STARTS TO THE LITTLE DOOR, BUT STOPS AT THE SOUND  
 OF PEOPLE APPROACHING, LEAPS BACK, ALERT. THE VOICES OFF-  
 STAGE GROW STRONGER. RUMPEL DISAPPEARS WITH THE BABY INTO  
 LITTLE DOOR. KING AND SON ENTER SIMULTANEOUSLY. KING  
 FROM LEFT, SON FROM RIGHT.)

## KING

(CROSS TO CENTER, MEETS SON.) Son . . . Ah! The child  
 is not alone.

## SON

Father, I left the child with you.

## KING

Where is my grandchild? (HE STRIDES TO RIGHT OF THE  
 CRADLE.)

## SON

(CROSSES QUICKLY TO LEFT OF CRADLE.) He is gone!



KING

Gone! ("TAKE" OVER CRADLE.)

MILLER

(OFFSTAGE.) Run! Run! (ENTERING RIGHT.) You stayed too long.

WIFE

(FOLLOWING MILLER.) It was you who wouldn't come.

BOTH

(QUARRELING AS THEY RUN TOWARD CENTER.) It was you. It was not I!

KING

(AS THEY ENTER.) You! YOU! YOU! I left the child with you!

MILLER

Why do you shout at us? What has come to pass? (HUDDLE DOWN RIGHT.)

WIFE

What is it?

KING

The child is gone! Gone!

(GENERAL CHAOTIC MOVEMENT. EVERYONE AROUND CRADLE.)

EVERYONE

(TO THE APPROPRIATE PERSON.) You promised to stay fast. And now the child is gone! (THE DAUGHTER HAS ENTERED BY THE LITTLE DOOR, UNSEEN BECAUSE SHE WAS COVERED BY THE CROWD. SHE BREAKS THROUGH THEM. DAUGHTER GOES TO CRADLE THEN CROSSES DOWN TO HUDDLE.)

DAUGHTER

What do you say? (SILENCE. SHE LOOKS INTO THEIR FACES, TURNS TO CRADLE. THEY ALL TURN AWAY. SHE IS SILENT AND STILL.) I am too late. (THEY MOVE TOWARD HER. SHE MOTIONS THEM AWAY. EACH CROSS TO SPOT UPPER RIGHT AND TURN

BACKS. SHE COVERS HER FACE WITH HER HANDS. RUMPEL AP-  
PEARS THROUGH DOOR, LEFT, GRINNING. THE BABY IN HIS ARMS.  
HE PRANCES AROUND HER, ENDING UP RIGHT CENTER. FINALLY  
HE LAUGHS ALOUD. SHE LOOKS UP AND CRIES OUT, THEN REMEM-  
BERS HER BARGAIN.)

DAUGHTER

Oh-h-h-h! . . . (KNEELING BY CRADLE.) Well, here you are  
again. (RUMPEL LAUGHS.)

RUMPEL

Guess your guess, Mrs. Queen. What is my name?

DAUGHTER

(CONFIDENT.) Is it--Henry?

RUMPEL

Ho! Ho! Ho! That is not my name.

DAUGHTER

(STEPS CLOSE TO RUMPEL.) Is it--John?

RUMPEL

Ho! Ho! Ho! That is not my name.

DAUGHTER

Is it--is it, perhaps (GRABS HER BABY.) RUMPELSTILTSKIN?

(HE FLIES INTO A TERRIBLE RAGE, STAMPING, SCREAMING,  
CHASES MILLER, MILLER'S WIFE, AND KING OFF THROUGH GARDEN,  
SON AND DAUGHTER INTO PALACE. RUMPEL IS SPITTING AND RUN-  
NING ABOUT THE STAGE. HE HOPS BACK TO THE EDGE OF THE  
WORLD--GYRATES OVER HIS POT AND DISAPPEARS.) [SEE FIGURE 4.]

CURTAIN



Figure 4

### CHAPTER III

#### CRITICAL EVALUATION

In a discussion of the final outcome of the play Rumpelstiltskin, as performed for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Children's Theatre, the director will compare what she set out to do with how well it was actually accomplished. To complete this analysis several items must be examined: achievement of interpretation, justification of deletions in the script, achievement of style, mood, rhythm, tempo and pace, as well as an evaluation of actor-director relationships.

#### Achievement of Interpretation

When the decision was made to produce Rumpelstiltskin, there was considerable concern for finding a script that accurately and sensibly dramatized the original tale. In choosing the Charlotte Chorpenning script, the director felt that she had located such a dramatic interpretation. All of the work of interpreting this script centered around the maintenance of the pure story line, without exaggeration or updating. The acting and directing of this play, in so far as it was possible, carried out this interpretation. The details were accurate, the plot intact, the characters resembled those created by Grimm, all that is, but Rumpelstiltskin.

The interpretation of Rumpelstiltskin as a tall, thin, black, evil character, rather than a small, troll-like man was unique, but successful. The actor achieved the frightening appearance and voice that was necessary and even highly desirable, as many of our audiences were black children who very much enjoyed seeing a black actor on stage. The director was satisfied that the intended effect was the same unearthly mystery and fear that the author intended.

The cast and director worked to establish a sincere approach to the play and their roles. They wished to give the effect of a second reality constructed on stage, never once standing back to mock themselves. They worked at it until the final result was totally acceptable to the audience.

Technically, the designers followed the director's wishes as far as the situation permitted. The touring scenery had to be designed simply. The emphasis turned to the fantasy aspects of the story, utilizing unusual colors and suggested scenery to create this magical, other-worldly feeling to support the fairy tale play. The director was totally satisfied with the simple, yet effective scenery.

The costumes were designed using the same muted colors as the scenery. They were regal and peasant styles taken loosely from the Gothic period. The King and his Son were costumed in purple, bright green, gold, and black

using rich fabrics. The Miller and his Wife were dressed in earth tones of brown, white, and grey using rough fabrics. The Miller's Daughter wore colors to match her station from a colorful peasant outfit to velvet and brocade as she becomes first princess and then queen. Rumpelstiltskin and Mother Hulda were costumed in dreary greens and blacks and ragged fabric to contrast with the others.

The director felt all aesthetic aspects of the play were successful. Occasionally, however, they did not meet the expectations the director had first established. The director's expectations were altered as the play developed.

#### Justification of Deletions in Script

The original script as Charlotte Chorpenning wrote it, was too long and had too many characters to be practical as a touring production. Plays that tour need to conform to the time structure of a normal school day that is divided into periods of forty-five to fifty minutes. The cutting that was done was carefully and purposefully done by director and cast, working together, as rehearsals progressed. The first cut version was furnished by the director, working primarily to maintain plot clarity and mood while eliminating characters and dialogue. The script submitted as a portion of this thesis is the result of further cutting.

The final script of Rumpelstiltskin, as the company performed it, was superior to the original, for our purposes. These cuts tightened the plot; and the suspenseful nature of the play increased. This streamlined version of a script written in the 1940s was felt to better suit the child of the 1970s.

All due consideration was taken for the playwright's intent and no additions were included to "update" the play. Only deletions for speed, reduced cast, and clarity were allowed.

#### Achievement of Style

The first intent of the director had been to establish realistic credibility of the characters and scenery. The style, as originally intended, was that of romantic melodrama, and remained consistent throughout.

The actors were encouraged to play their emotions accurately, true to life. The very nature of the characters and the dialogue helped to create something different from realism. The acting style and ultimately the style of the whole production rotated towards strong melodrama. The director felt the style that evolved was the most natural and successful for this script.

The concept of exaggerated movement, vocal delivery, and design fell first from the design concept. The design that Carl Keator presented was that of delicate fantasy rather than exaggerated caricature. The setting, as a



reviewer stated it, was "very colorful and imaginative-- a pastel patchwork of a castle . . . ." The director had not envisioned such a design and was pleasantly surprised to see the final sketch which completely convinced her that it did beautifully fulfill the function of creating mood and feelings of a story book world.

From that point, as more ideas were fed into the production, more depth and intensity became possible. The director became an instrument for coordinating the final decisions but, ultimately, the play was a product of many creators. Each element was integrated into the play harmoniously and the director was responsible for that harmony but not the creation of every individual portion of the whole..

Two other stylistic considerations that should be mentioned were those of presentational versus representational style or those of fantasy versus realism.

The decision was made to avoid direct contact with the audience until the final scenes. It was decided that the use of the proscenium stage necessitated a departure from the real world; direct comment to the audience might break that delicate wall of imagination. The final scene of the Daughter asking for some advice and Rumpelstiltskin throwing a tantrum to the audience increased the excitement and involvement at a point in the story where release was needed by the young audience.

In the same vein, the line had to be carefully drawn between fantasy and realism. Fairy tales are what they are because of the introduction of magic or supernatural people or events into an ordinary person's life.

We had two types of characters to observe. Mother Hulda and Rumpelstiltskin needed to live in their own magic place "at the Edge of the World." Their appearance and actions had to be irrational and bizarre because they were not real. They could do or be anything the director could create. It was right they should be out of step with the real world. The royalty and peasants were different. They were possible in a fairy tale world. One could look around and actually find a King; perhaps not one with such an extreme love of money as was in our tale but, nonetheless, kings do exist in our world.

The most nearly realistic character in the story was the Daughter, who every child who saw the play could readily recognize as being somewhat like himself. She thought and felt and acted as a real child in her situation might. Hers was the most realistic style on stage both in appearance and manner.

All of these diverse styles demanded by the nature of the play meshed well together, satisfying director, audience, and performers.

### Achievement of Mood

The audience reaction was intense throughout. The director considered this reaction evidence that we had created an effective mood of suspense. At the opening of the curtain, Rumpelstiltskin stirring his pot of evil brew, the audience was immediately snared by the low, droning music, dim lighting, and Rumpelstiltskin's ominous presence. His periodic reappearance and hovering presence cast a feeling of impending doom and danger over the other scenes played in full light in front of the "patchwork pastel castle."<sup>1</sup>

Deletions from the script made it easier to sustain this mood as there were fewer pauses to sidetrack the action into lyricism. We tried to maintain a swift, clear plot line which set our mood of urgency, righted the wrong, and saved the good people from the evil trap. This suspense was maintained from the curtain music to the finish.

There were other simpler moods developed by characters within the play, too. Romantic scenes were played sweetly by the King's son and the Miller's daughter. Rumpelstiltskin could be counted on to add fright and suspense to every scene. The King, during the first scenes of the play, established an air of villainy and deceit about him, and the Miller and his Wife brought many moments of burlesque into the drama.

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix, "Play Offers Real Villain," p. 110.

The scenery added greatly to the sustained fantasy of Rumpelstiltskin and the special lighting, especially of the Edge of the World, the green light from the pot, and the eerie lighting of the spinning wheel helped set up the supernatural world in which evil things do happen.

#### Achievement of Rhythm, Tempo, Pace

The fast pace of the play was perhaps one of the most successful elements of Rumpelstiltskin. It made the play more hard-hitting and effective. The script deletions facilitated this as did the expertise of the performers.

Rumpelstiltskin had his own rhythm. Entering each scene, he began to conduct it more his own way, tending many times to make the others on stage look "out of step" in his world. His movements and vocal gymnastics were primarily responsible. It added to the play's overall effect.

The ending of the play created a high tempo, there was no resolution, or lessening of the tension. The play sent the audience into the sunlight talking loudly and excitedly. This is not typical of children's plays, usually ending "happily ever after." The villain was defeated, but only at the very end of the play; he screams in fury and the curtain closes. This was the director's desired effect, and seemed to please the audience as well.

### Evaluation of Actor-Director Relationships

The directing of the play presented many problems but none were so large that they were not overcome. The play was generally a cooperative effort. The actors occasionally tried to dominate the rehearsals but, in general, respected the director and helped by adding useful ideas.

The actors were allowed much freedom in the creation of their characters. There were occasions when they asked more of the director in terms of criticism, particularly after experimenting with various approaches to a character. The director did not always give spontaneous feedback to the actors, assuming they could settle into a character on their own. This assumption later proved faulty. The actors did not get enough criticism.

Many of the performers were more experienced than the director, and she was sensitive to this situation. She was afraid of being unjustly critical and so refrained from a great deal of necessary appraisal of the performers as the rehearsals progressed. There was also a feeling of vagueness on the part of the director as to exactly what type of characters she wished to see develop. The director gave general guidelines but expected the experienced actors to fill out the characters into people. The characters did develop, but not as smoothly as might have been the case with stronger leadership.

There were problems in expressing the desired effect to the actors. The director's concepts were not always clearly expressed so that the actors could follow them through to completion. Some characters achieved great believability, notably the character known as the Miller's daughter. Her ingenue-type role was never laughable in its sweetness but rather that of an innocent girl swept into an evil plot beyond her control. The actress mastered her character early in rehearsals and gained depth as the run of the show continued. She was well suited for the role vocally and physically and carried it further than the director had anticipated.

Mother Hulda, as a matronly earth-mother type of character, was supernatural yet related to Rumpelstiltskin in a very genuine manner. Theirs was a comfortable mother-son relationship that showed plainly Rumpelstiltskin's weaknesses in the face of another older, wiser spirit. Her chiding dialogue added depth to Rumpelstiltskin's portrayal. The actress who played the role of Mother Hulda developed her role nicely with her kindly vocal mannerisms. Her large build gave her a maturity and stability that contrasted well with Rumpelstiltskin's lanky, nervous character.

The next most successful characters were the Miller and his Wife. As rustics they played a pair of buffoons, over-reacting to situations for comic effect. They had a warm relationship apparent between them on stage, but were



actually more caricatures than real people. The director felt this approach was somewhat indicated in the script and that it would make the play more varied and fun to add these "type" actors to the cast.

The actor playing the King gave a strong, melodramatic portrayal, exaggerated for effect. He was a villain at the play's onset and eventually mellows, toward the end, with the birth of his grandson. He experimented with several styles of acting in creating the King's characterization, and finally settled on one that resembled the typical villain of turn-of-the-century melodrama. He gained much more credibility as the play progressed, becoming more interested in his grandson than his gold. The actor included a wide range of emotions but never attained the level of involvement the director would like to have seen in his performance. Nonetheless, the audience readily grasped his villainy and even responded vocally as he swept off the stage.

The least successful character, in terms of what was desired versus what was actually accomplished was the Prince. The actor portraying this role had a physical manner that lent itself to burlesque. His movements were abrupt and occasionally even his non-speaking presence on stage would be a distraction from the ongoing dialogue. His attempts of sincerity were carried too far, resulting in a comic rather than realistic character. Although small,



this role was necessary to provide the Daughter with romantic interest and could have been better played and directed.

Early in rehearsals we held a discussion of characterization. The director felt it was needed to establish believable relationships between the characters. Each actor was acting on his own. The discussion, conducted rather informally, did not achieve entirely the depth the director wished. The actors failed to take it seriously. It seemed to be received more as an exercise to include in a thesis than a means to get in touch with important relationships in the play.

Despite the problems discussed, the director felt the actors were all very professional in attitude and performance. They did try to follow the direction and all were extremely sincere in trying to create a play that would please their child audience. The actors enjoyed helping to cut the script. They helped the director to retain the continuity without losing important plot information, and helped to make the script their own.

Many of the problems of dealing with the actors have been handled in the previous discussion. In terms of solving these problems the director would handle similar situations in two different ways:

The insecurity of the director could best be controlled through complete and thorough preparation for all

rehearsals. Establishing early in rehearsals definite ideas for the actors and technicians to develop would also help. A realization on the director's part that all actors need direction, even the most professional, would be the final step. This director allowed the actors to develop and select on their own, valuing other's judgment and taste above her own.

Respect for the material could be instilled in the entire company by emphasizing the important objectives of believability and sincerity of performance early in rehearsals. The performers must come to a realization that children's theatre deserves the best production possible and is in no way inferior. This feeling is best engendered by the careful selection of good material, tailoring it to suit the needs of actor and audience. Rumpelstiltskin, as Charlotte Chorpenning wrote it, was a fine script for the Goodman Theater in the 1940s. We altered it for our 1970s tour company by contouring it to our needs.

The director worked with a very creative cast. Their experience and professional status contributed to high quality of inventive cooperation which resulted in many actor-initiated contributions.

During the initial read-through of the script suggestions were made as to character types that the director wished to see created. Suggestions were made in this direction such as Laurel and Hardy images for the Miller and his Wife.

The Rumpelstiltskin character developed easily. The actor was aware of his own physical variation from the usual Rumpelstiltskin character and used those differences to create a frightening supernatural character. He was very free to move about the stage and the director encouraged him to try even more bending and posturing. This was helpful and increased the actor's effectiveness as the play developed. The director was able to see possibilities the actor could not feel at first.

Many of the scenes were worked in pairs. This was very useful in establishing relationships between the characters and ultimately led to the visual relationships becoming clear on stage. The King and his Son rehearsed their duel carefully to make it believable and to show the conflict that exists between these two people; that is, a son turning against his father's wishes for the first time. Rumpelstiltskin and the Miller's Daughter had to physically establish their relationships; the fear she felt and the power he had, needed to be evident in each scene. Intense rehearsal together helped this become convincing. Mother Hulda had to rehearse alone with Rumpelstiltskin also. They were two supernatural characters confronting each other, she having given him his powers. Much of the success of the play rested on the strong relationships between the characters.

The director asked for an in-depth discussion of the characters, hoping through this device to help them to realize their many facets. As written, the characters seemed one-dimensional. Background and ages were discussed. An important separation between the fantasy characters, the royalty and the lower peasant characters was also recognized. The talk was patiently endured by the actors but was not particularly helpful. The director had waited too late in the rehearsal period to try to effect any change. They were all quite locked into their roles. Some insight as to each character's purpose in the play did become evident in the discussion, however.

Finally, the director felt that the Prince had a difficult time establishing his role. He went too far in acting the part of a prince and as a result his gallantry looked more like a parody of the role rather than a genuine King's Son. His gestures were far too stylized and erratic to be suitable. From the director's point of view, he was the least successful character in the play.

#### Audience Reaction

The audience was generally enthralled. They sat silently throughout scenes that were suspenseful, and followed with great enthusiasm Rumplestiltskin's taunting of the Miller's Daughter and the sword fight between the King and his Son.

There were always gasps as the Miller's Daughter entered in her royal gown. The audience squealed with excitement as Rumpelstiltskin finally blew up with rage. The audience always left the theatre in an uproar of music, flashpots, and lights. They seemed to have loved it.

Each performance brought a different response to the Miller's Daughter trying to guess his name. Most groups spoke the name, some very loudly, to try to help her. A deaf audience sat furiously signing the name and applauded wildly when the actress playing the role of the Daughter both spoke and used the deaf sign for Rumpelstiltskin to show the audience she knew. It was an exciting moment.

The attempts at the Laurel and Hardy image of the Miller and his Wife were very successful. Their little touch of burlesque, falls, stumbling and dropping, punching, and overblown gestures proved to be very funny to our young viewers.

Rumpelstiltskin's spinning and cackling were very well received. The children always moved forward to see him more closely. There was inevitably a vocal response when he spun the spinning wheel, green and flashing.

The audiences seemed very entertained. Restlessness was seldom observed. Plot and action followed swiftly, sustaining the mood even through scene changes with speed and music. Although the audience many times responded noisily to the play, the director was surprised as even more

overt response had been expected. This play seemed to hold children without any direct contact with them. There were no direct questions, chases through the audience or other presentational techniques. The director's previous experience with children's theatre had been strictly an attempt to elicit verbal responses to indicate approval and involvement. Involvement was demonstrated instead by silence throughout the play.

More wiggling had been expected. With more observation the director became satisfied that the children were involved, not bored, with the play. The silence was that of attentive children.

The company and director wanted to entertain their young audience with good drama for an hour and they did.

### Conclusions

In concluding there is one more observation left to be made. The technical aspects of the production were cleverly designed to add enormously to the success of the play. The visual elements of Rumpelstiltskin were very important. The scenery, costumes, lighting, and properties were very well designed and constructed to make it visually exciting and successful. The use of greens, purples, and yellows was especially effective in the world of fantasy that was created. Special lighting on the spinning wheel and Rumpelstiltskin's pot created magic for the children



as did the construction of masks for Rumpelstiltskin and Mother Hulda. The use of a scrim to hide the edge of the world would have enhanced the mystery and distance from the garden scene.

The director is most grateful to all those who gave a part of themselves to the whole effort of this production for children. It is important to give our best to those who see with the eyes of children.



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## APPENDIX

APPENDIX

UNC-G THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

STUDY GUIDE  
RUMPELSTILTKIN

To the Classroom Teacher:

Help us be successful. This study guide is written to help you prepare the children for an exciting theatrical experience. We hope these suggestions can be useful.

The Play:

This production of the old Grimm fairy tale is done in a visually colorful manner to tell as faithfully as possible the popular story of evil Rumpelstiltkin and his attempt to steal the Queen's baby. The children will see him spin straw into gold and see the Queen outsmart him and his evil tricks by finally guessing his name. The greedy King and the Miller and his Wife add variety and fun to the story and Mother Hulda tries unsuccessfully to keep Rumpelstiltskin under control at the Edge of the World. The play has suspense, humor, music and an exciting plot to please any child who likes stories.

Attending the Play:

What do children get from seeing a play?

1. Plays are fun.
2. Plays are live people performing just for you.
3. Plays are good for the imagination.
4. Plays are educational. They tell stories of people and places far removed from everyday life.
5. Attending a play gives a child an opportunity to learn to be a good audience member.

Activities:

Art:

1. Read the story from Grimm's Fairy Tales. Have the children draw the characters from their own

imagination. Afterwards, compare the drawings with the actors they saw. Did they like their own concepts better?

2. Rumpelstiltskin lives at the edge of the world. Have the children interpret this in a drawing.
3. Make a mask of the character they liked the best in the play. Use paper bags, cloth, paper mache, etc.
4. Make puppets of the characters. Act out scenes from the play.
5. Put a piece of butcher paper on the wall, several feet long. Have the class draw a mural of their favorite scenes.
6. Make moveable paper figures of Rumpelstiltskin, fastening the joints with paper fasteners. Make him dance.

#### Music:

1. Select music that would identify each character's entrance. Try different types of music to see if they can establish that the Miller is happy, the King regal and greedy, etc.
2. Move to the music the way in which each of the characters move.
3. Put Rumpelstiltskin's chant to rhythm or music and learn it together:  
 "Today I brew, tomorrow I bake  
 I stamp my foot and the earth doth shake.  
 And no one knows from whence I came,  
 Or that Rumpelstiltskin is my name."

#### Language Arts:

1. New words to be learned in the play:
 

spindle	straw
betrothal	miller
to brew	bargain
greed	dungeon
flax	temper
2. If you had to guess a strange name like Rumpelstiltskin, what would be your guesses?
3. Make a class booklet--have each child write a review or letter of what he liked and didn't like about the play. Send it to us. We'd love to read it! Children are the best critics.
4. Everyone draw a picture of Rumpelstiltskin. Write his name underneath it.

5. Make a bulletin board. Have each student write about his favorite part of the play. Illustrate the paper and put them up together to help remember the play.
6. Have the children tell about their favorite parts of the play.
7. Learn about fairy tales. What are they? They contain magic, supernatural beings, clear distinctions between good and evil, unreal places, usually kings and queens, talking animals and a happy ending. Name all of the fairy tales you can think of.
8. What is spinning? What does a spinning wheel do?
9. Talk about greed. Rumpelstiltskin thinks he can rule all men if he can make them greedy enough. What do you think? Can you think of other storybook characters that are greedy? (King Midas, Cinderella's step sisters.) What happened to them?
10. Write or tell a different ending for the play.
11. Write a letter telling a friend or parent about the play.
12. As a class, make a list of rules for being a good audience.

#### Creative Dramatics:

1. Read the story aloud to the class. Choose parts and act out favorite scenes. This can be done many times by different groups so that everyone has a chance. The part of the audience can be "acted" by those watching. Have them cheer or laugh or even boo at certain action or word cues.
2. Discuss traits of royalty. What makes a King look like a King? Have everyone "try on" being a King or Queen in walk, manner and even costume, if possible.
3. With simple puppets act out the play or have everyone make a puppet of Rumpelstiltskin. Learn to make him move and act in an evil way. Explore voice, movement and facial expressions.
4. Using the characters from our play, create another story, perhaps reforming Rumpelstiltskin.
5. Learn Rumpelstiltskin's chant (see previous page) and say it while pantomiming dancing and stirring around a large pot.

These activity ideas are only suggestions, geared for many levels of children. Use them as a springboard to enrich this experience for your class. We hope you enjoy Rumpelstiltskin when it comes to your school!

# RUMPELSTILTSKIN

BY

CHARLOTTE B. CHORPENNING

PRESENTED BY THE THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE  
PROFESSIONAL TOURING REPERTORY COMPANY

of the Department of Drama and Speech of the  
College of Arts and Sciences at the  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Directed by Sue Metz  
Scenery and Lighting Designed by Carl Keator  
Costumes Designed by Gill Thompson

## CAST

Rumpelstiltskin	Junious Leak
Mother Holda	Rebecca Bean
Miller's Daughter	Sybil Rosen
Miller	Bill Raulerson
Miller's Wife	Mara Sage
Prince	Michael Lilly
King	Barry Bell

Act One	Act Two	Act Three
The Edge of the World and the Palace Garden.	The Spinning Room next morning.	Same as Act One, a year later.

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED AS THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director/Stage Manager	John Fahnestock
Costume Supervisor	Zoe Brown
Scenic Supervisor	Andreas Nomikos
Lighting Supervisor	Robert Thurston
Scenery and Lighting Crew	Gene Stewart, Joe Forbes, Andy Morgan, Barry Bell, Louis Bell (Head Lights)
Costume Crew	Gill Thompson (Head), Sue Metz, Nancy Farrar, Joe Conger, Kaye Brown, Sally Birdsong, Patti Morel, Colin Thompson, Rebecca Bean (Costume Mistress)
Properties	John Fahnestock
Masks	Donna Bradford, Stacy Ray
Sound	Dorian Harold (Head), Susan Marrison
Program Design	Gill Thompson
Poster Design	Barbara Bridgers
Director The Theatre for Young People	Tom Behm
Company Manager for the Tour	Barry Bell
TYP Graduate Assistants	Carole McGee, David Leong, Doreen Heard

RUMPELSTILTSKIN is produced through special arrangements with Anchorage Press.  
Take your program home and cut out the mask of the King or Princess. Why not perform scenes?

## AIMS OF THE THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- To set a high standard of entertainment for children.
- To stimulate creative imagination and ability.
- To set high standards of good speech and diction.
- To teach values, principles, ideas, and ideals.
- To broaden intracultural understanding and citizenship.
- To develop interest in, and appreciation of, the arts.

## ABOUT THE THEATRE FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE TOURING COMPANY

Bringing live, quality children's theatre to the young people of the state is the primary goal of the TYP Professional Touring Repertory Company. Your comments and suggestions on how well we achieve our goal are greatly appreciated. The eight members of the company this year are among North Carolina's finest young theatre talents. We'd like you to meet them.

Rebecca Bean (Mother Holda) is making her third tour for TYP this year. She has appeared in TYP productions of "Punch and Judy", "The Panda and the Spy", "Aesop's Fables", and "Tarheel Tales Theatre". This past summer Becca was stage manager at "Horn in the West" at Boone. She is from Lenoir and did her undergraduate work at Appalachian State University and received her graduate degree from UNC-G.

Barry Bell (King) has played leading roles in UNC-G Theatre productions of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof", "The Balcony", "That Championship Season", and "Luv". He has played leading roles for Dinner Theatres in Greensboro, Atlanta, Charlotte, and Kingsport, Tennessee. Barry performed in "Horn in the West" and The Poor Theatre Repertory Company. He is from Charlotte and was active in high school and community theatres there. Barry appeared in "The Emperor's New Clothes" and "Good Grief, A Griffin" for TYP. In January he was chosen to audition for University Resident Theatre Association.

Junious Leak (Rumpelstiltskin) has played leading roles at A & T University in Greensboro in "The King and I", "A Raisin in the Sun", "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?", "The Blacks", "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground", and "In White America". Junious was awarded the Best Actor award from A & T in 1973 and 1974 and is dedicated to becoming a successful actor. He recently completed the film "Night of Mourning" which is to be released this spring.

Michael Lilly (Prince) most recently played the lead in "Barefoot in the Park" at the Dinner Theatre of the Sir Walter Hotel in Raleigh. A recent graduate from UNC-G, Michael appeared in "The Orestia" which was chosen to perform in the American College Theatre Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington. No stranger to TYP Touring, Michael played several roles including the Devil in the 1973 show, "Punch and Judy".

John Fahnestock (Technical Director/Stage Manager) attended Western Carolina University and graduated from UNC-G in December. He was master electrician at Parkway Playhouse last summer and has worked as a stage rigger for the American Scenic Company. John designed the masks worn in the UNC-G Theatre production of "The Great Magician". No stranger to acting, John appeared in "The Orestia" which was chosen to perform in the American College Theatre Festival at Kennedy Center in 1974. He has played leads in "That Championship Season", "Cinderella", "Jack and the Beanstalk", and "The Ghost Sonata" at UNC-G.

Bill Raulerson (Miller) has performed in Dinner Theatres in Greensboro, Charlotte, Atlanta, and Kingsport in leading roles in "The Lion in Winter", "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest", "Man of La Mancha", "Fiddler on the Roof", and "Play It Again Sam". In college, Bill played leads in "Oklahoma", "A Streetcar Named Desire", "Tartuffe", and "My Fair Lady". Bill just finished a long run at The Barn Dinner Theatre in Greensboro.

Sybil Rosen (Miller's Daughter) graduated from UNC-G in 1972 and has since played roles in "Godspell", "The Fantasticks", "The Killing of Sister George", "Two for the Seesaw", and "Teahouse of the August Moon" for theatres throughout the South. For UNC-G Theatre she played leading roles in "Dark of the Moon", "Waiting for Godot", "The Tempest", "Picnic", and many more. This past summer she lead an improvisational workshop for children at Lake Lanier, Georgia and has appeared in several children's theatre productions.

Mara Sage (Miller's Wife) graduated from UNC-G this past December after playing leading roles in UNC-G Theatre productions of "Anything Goes", "Fiddler on the Roof", and "A Cry of Players". This past summer Mara played Adelaide in "Guys and Dolls" and Gertrude in "Hamlet ESP" for the Summer Repertory Theatre at UNC-G. At Parkway Playhouse Mara played Nancy in "Oliver" and for TYP she played the White Rabbit in "Alice in Wonderland".



# Play Offers Real Villain

## Rumpelstiltskin-Classic, Spellbinding Case

BY JERRY KENION  
Daily News Staff Writer

There is a real villain lurking about Taylor Theatre on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His name is Rumpelstiltskin—remember that, it's important.

This green-masked, wicked cradle-robber is out to steal the first-born child of a King. He's working through human greed so that he can destroy the earth's population. It's a classic case of good versus evil, and it's very spellbinding and exciting in the Theatre for Young People's professional touring Repertory Company's production of "Rumpelstiltskin."

The children's play, which opened here Sunday, is playing again this week, through Sunday afternoon. Wednesday afternoon I joined several hundred children to enter the land of make-believe, where the Brothers Grimm's tale of suspense and intrigue came alive through the excellent skills of TYP's professional actors.

Junious Leak takes bad-guy honors in this production, presiding over a boiling pot into which he plans to dunk the young King's firstborn. Though Junious is a slender and fairly tall young man, he manages to become the "little" Rumpelstiltskin, through bending, twisting and turning his agile body. His high, cackling laugh and menacing threats add to this slightly pitiful interpretation of the mad little man.

Sybil Rosen is the essence of sincere, gentle motherhood, sweetly trying to protect her baby from a forgotten promise she made to the villain in exchange for his turning straw into gold earlier in the story. Sybil seems to be really frightened each time that Rumpelstiltskin sneaks up on her, causing the audience to wince in sympathy. Lovely in her ivory velvet and brocade costumes (Gill Thompson's creations), Sybil is Miller's Daughter who becomes a queen.

Bill Rahlerson and Mara Stage, as the Miller and Miller's Wife, bumble and stumble themselves through a lot of comedy, trying to do the best for their daughter, though they could get their daughter into the whole mess in the first place. The slaves create lovable and

### A Review

grandparents and add a touch of slapstick humor to the tale.

Barry Bell, imposing as the older King, creates a rather eccentric character, used to having his way. Barry is quite successful in transforming the ranting, greedy old King into a gentler grandfather who has learned to appreciate human beings more than gold.

Michael Lilly, playing the young Prince who marries and

inherits the kingdom, is formal and yet tender in his scenes with the young maiden who becomes his wife. Rebecca Bean, as Mother Holda, is properly grouchy in her goadings and warnings to the villain.

Directed by Sue Metz, these actors bring excitement and well-paced entertainment to young people. The show is presented in a very colorful and imaginative setting of a pastel patchwork of a castle, designed by Carl Kantor.

Now what was that important name? The Queen really needs

to know it in order to save her baby. Perhaps you know some children (or adults) who would like to assist the Queen in finding out that very strange name.

"Rumpelstiltskin" will be presented again today at 4 p.m.; Saturday at 10 a.m., 1 and 3:30 p.m.; and Sunday at 2 and 4 p.m. Tickets will be on sale at Taylor Theatre box office prior to each performance.

Following Sunday's final performance in Greensboro, "Rumpelstiltskin" will go on tour, for the benefit of young people throughout the state.



# Antic-Packed Grimms' Fairy Tale Alive; Audience's Enthusiasm Surpasses Players'

By BONNIE ROSS  
Staff Writer

"Rumpelstiltskin" yesterday came to life in the auditorium of Langston Junior High School.

The antic-packed Grimms' fairy tale was retold by the Theatre for Young People (TYP), a professional touring repertory company. The cast of seven lively graduate students chalked up another successful production for the speech and drama department of the University of North Carolina.

The enthusiasm on stage, however, was surpassed by that of the audience. The production's brilliant colors alone in the eyes of over 600 Danville school children, ranging in age from 5 to 10.

Its antics danced in their laughter. For a short hour, the

tale lived in their imaginations.

Sponsored by the Danville Children's Theatre Inc., the play was the second in a series of four productions scheduled for city primary students this year. The local promoters of theatre for children engaged two North Carolina companies this year in addition to two of the traditional New York groups. Their decision to try some talent near this area—from Greensboro and Raleigh—appears to have been wise.

At least the UNC-G performers exhibited standards of excellence equal to those of their northern counterparts.

The 19th century yarn they spun begins on the edge of the world where Rumpelstiltskin, played by Junious Leak, is brewing a smoky concoction in

a coal-black pot.

Rumpelstiltskin tells Mother Holda (Rebecca Bean) that he wants to "rule the thoughts of mankind." To do so, he must obtain an infant prince to add to his concoction.

The tale unfolds as the miller (Bill Raulerson) and his wife (Mara Sage) and daughter (Sybil Rosen) enter a palace garden. Bragging to the greedy king (Barry Bell) that their daughter can spin straw into gold, the miller and his wife engage their daughter to the prince (Michael Lilly).

The king pledges to hand over his crown and allow his son to marry the miller's daughter if she can spin straw into gold.

The prince bestows engagement tokens—a necklace and gold ring—on the peasant

girl. On the wedding day, the king orders her to spin a room full of straw into gold or die.

Sitting beside the loom and weeping, the frightened girl is visited by Rumpelstiltskin. She gives him the necklace in exchange for the first room full of gold.

The greedy king orders her to spin two more rooms full of straw into gold. For the second, she gives Rumpelstiltskin her engagement ring. He makes her promise to give him her first-born child for the transformation of the third room.

The miller's daughter and the prince are married and the greedy king relinquished his throne.

A year passes, and Rumpelstiltskin comes to collect his payment—the young couple's first child. He tells the young queen that he will let her keep the child if she can guess his name in a year and a day. (In the original Grimms' tale, the queen had three days to guess the name.)

Secure in the knowledge that the queen would never discover his name, he dances around his iron pot singing, "Today I brew. Tomorrow I bake, and the next day I'll be the queen's child take. For little deems my royal dame, that Rumpelstiltskin is my name."

The queen travels to the edge of the world and hears him singing. When he returns to take the child, she guesses his name and saves her child.

In his anger, Rumpelstiltskin disappears in a cloud of smoke.

The best performances were given by Barry Bell as the king and Sybil Rosen, the miller's daughter. Bell delighted the children with his outlandish barking commands.

Sybil's transitions from ecstasy to remorse were convincing. Her expressions portrayed the charming innocence of a peasant maiden quite consistently.

The antics of Bill Raulerson and Mara Sage were, at times, difficult physical motions. In

slapstick fashion, their feats brought laughter and applause.

Caporting around the stage, Junious Leak handled the difficult character of Rumpelstiltskin with ease. Rebecca Bean and Michael Lilly gave delightful supporting performances.

The scenery was not elaborate but was effective. And Director Sam Metz offered the young audience a fast-moving play that held their attention.

Children often are accused of being the worst critics because their attention to detail can foil the most devious of actors. If so, the TYP should be proud of the reception they received here.

Amid the smiling children, there was one six-year-old girl who expressed slight confusion. She approached Junious Leak (Rumpelstiltskin) after the performance and told him that she liked the play.

However, she said, she thought he ought to know that it was a woodman and not the queen that heard Rumpelstiltskin singing his name.

It appears safe to say the TYP had an attentive audience in Danville. *Danville Register Feb. 7*

# 'Rumpelstiltskin' delights audience

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BY NANCY VON HEERMANN  
UNC-G News Service

Whether spinning yarns in a play called "Tartan Tales" or spinning straw into gold in the fairy tale, "Rumpelstiltskin," the state's only professional children's theatre touring company is sure to delight its audiences.

The Theatre for Young People Touring Repertory Company, sponsored by the Department of Drama and Speech at UNC-G, opened its spring season on campus

Jan. 26 with "Rumpelstiltskin." After productions at UNC-G through Feb. 1, TYP takes to the road, sharing its talents with children from Sparta to Charlotte.

"Tartan Tales" was performed last season on the TYP tour, and is being repeated this year by popular request. It's a composite of five

favorite tales from the Appalachian mountains: "Jack and the Robbers," "The Big Toe," "Old Dry Fry," "Wicked John and the Devil," and "Jack of the North Wind."

Although nearly half of TYP's touring season will be sponsored by the Division of Cultural Arts of the State Department of Public Instruction, there are still bookings available in April.

The cost of sponsoring TYP is \$400 for one performance and \$500 for two performances the same day. Past sponsors include county arts councils, a public library, Junior Service League, P.T.A.'s and a Rotary Club. Both plays can be performed or the sponsor may choose two performances of the same play.

Anyone interested in bringing the TYP Professional Touring Repertory Company to their community should contact Tom Behm, Theatre for Young People, UNC-G, Greensboro, NC 27412.

"Tartan Tales" is a popular production throughout the state," said Behm, who is director of TYP. "But it is particularly appropriate in areas where a stage is not available."

"The play is performed in the round," explained Behm, who directs it. "The actors, dressed in coveralls and T-shirts, are seated on a rug with a minimum of props. The children sit very close to the rug and are directly involved in the play, either with verbal responses or with a part."

Thus, the youngsters are not only members of the audience, but of the production itself. Behm said they may have like the Old North Wind, chant in chorus, or play tug of war with an imaginary rope.

And although props and costumes are lacking, apparently the children never miss them. TYP has received drawings from their young audiences which illustrate quite vividly that imaginations fill in here and there.

"The result," said Rebecca Bean, who will be making her third TYP tour, "is fantastic."

"The children had drawn the most elaborate and colorful of props and

costumes for us. One of my favorites was the tug of war showing a great big rope, when actually there was none."

For a bit of contrast there's more traditional theatre fare in "Rumpelstiltskin," the suspense filled story of the little man who teaches a miller's daughter to spin straw into gold after she promises him her firstborn child.

Produced with complete scenery, sound, costumes, and make-up, the play gives children a traditional theatre experience in an auditorium. It was directed by Sue Metz, a candidate for the master of fine arts degree in drama at UNC-G.

According to Behm, TYP likes to do both plays in a school or community. "Tartan Tales" is a good play to do in the morning in a cafeteria, since it doesn't require a stage," he said. The "Rumpelstiltskin" could be done in the afternoon on stage to give children a different sort of theatre experience.

The seven actors and actresses who form the TYP Touring Repertory Company are experienced in all kinds of theatre, including that for both children and adults.

They include: Rebecca Bean from Lenoir who will play Mother Hulda in "Rumpelstiltskin;" Barry Bell from Charlotte who is a UNC-G graduate

and has played many leads here and in dinner theatres; Jason Lash from Greensboro who has been recognized twice by A&T University's Drama Department as outstanding actor of the year; and Michael Laffey of Raleigh who recently appeared at the St. Walter Hotel Dinner Theatre.

Also, Bill Randerson, who has toured the dinner theatre circuit throughout the Southeast; Sybil Rouse who has played many roles recently in the Atlanta area; and Mary Sage, a recent UNC-G graduate, who has performed in the UNC-G production of "Anything Goes." Technical director for the tour is John Fehner-ack, also a UNC-G graduate.



The Miller's Daughter (Sybil Rouse) is ordered to spin straw into gold by the King (Barry Bell) in this scene from RUMPELSTILTSKIN. The Miller (Bill Randerson), his wife (Mary Sage) and the Prince (Michael Laffey) watch. The production is being toured by The Theatre for Young People Professional Touring Repertory Company.

# Susan Metz, woman of many parts, finds satisfaction in theatre work

UNC-G News Bureau — In her last role, Mm. Susan Metz of UNC-G was a pregnant robot. Now that she has a three-month-old daughter, she is back on stage — this time cast more appropriately as a mother.

The part of Mrs. Harcourt, the grumpy mother in the upcoming UNC-G Theatre production of *Anything Goes*, is more fitting than her last role, Susan admitted.

"Last spring I had a part in 'R.U.R.' — a play about robots," said Susan, balancing her daughter Jessica on one knee. "The whole point of the play was that robots cannot reproduce, and there I was — six-months pregnant."

"Everyone kept making cracks about a pregnant robot, and someone suggested that I might give birth to an alarm clock," said Susan, laughing.

"The stage was dark, and I didn't let the audience see my profile, so no one but the cast was in on the joke."

Susan, who as Mrs. Harcourt is a sophisticated elderly woman who disapproves of her daughter Hope's young man, is presently busy with rehearsals three nights a week for *Anything Goes*, the Cole Porter musical.

*Anything Goes* has one of those tacky old scripts like you've seen on television a million times," said Susan.

"I play the grumpy old mother who is trying to break up her daughter's romance. There's a gangster disguised as a priest and Reno Sweeny is an

ex-evangelist turned nightclub owner, which gives Cole Porter the chance to get in a spiritual."

Susan has appeared in one play other than her humorous walk-on in "R.U.R." since coming to UNC-G a year ago. She played Padrona, "another old lady," in the Theatre for Young People (TYP) production of "The Man Who Killed Time" last year.

She also designed costumes, which she describes as her second love, for two UNC-G productions — *Hansel and Gretel* and *R.U.R.*

"My first love is teaching," said Susan. A graduate of the State University of New York at Geneseo, the New York native received a B.S. degree in public speaking and theater education.

She taught high school for three years while her husband, Dale, was in the Air Force in San Antonio, Texas.

Her interest in teaching and children were primary factors, explained Susan, in her decision to specialize in children's theater in the master of fine arts program at UNC-G.

"Children are the ultimate audience," said Susan. "I think it's good for them to be exposed to live theater since they grow up in a world of television with stick figures on

cartoon shows.

"The arts — music, drama, art — are often neglected in the public schools, which is a shame. These things are with a child forever. Teach him to sing or paint or entertain and he has these abilities the rest of his life."

The set of *Anything Goes*, a three-deck ship at the New York harbor, has been designed specifically to take advantage of the large, 96-foot stage in Taylor Building, offering lots of space for spectacular production numbers.

Although the play emphasizes song and dance, Susan admitted neither is her forte.

"I join in a few of the numbers, but don't have any solos," she said. "I've done a lot of old ladies' parts. I guess because my height and voice are right for them."

Is it difficult to combine motherhood and the pursuit of a master's degree in a field like theater?

"No," said Susan. "My husband, who teaches special education at Kiser Junior High, babysits at night so I can get to rehearsals. We live near campus and I either bring Jessie over with me to class or take her to a babysitter."